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To Art

from

Peggy

Christmas 1934

COUNT FELIX VON LUCKNER

"I've seen plenty of fo'c'sles, and maybe I could be a professor of fo'c'sles if some university would teach that subject."

A STAR BOOK

THE SEA DEVIL'S FO'C'SLE

By
LOWELL THOMAS

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A MATTER-OF-FACT PREFACE TO A SALTY YARN

This Sea Devil friend of mine, Count Luckner, is a character of increasing wonder and beguilement. He has been lecturing in the United States with unparalleled success these past two years, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back again. Everywhere he is superbly unique, all that you would expect, and more, of a titled aristocrat who ran away from his father's castle as a boy, went to sea, lived for years the rude life of a sailor before the mast, became an officer in the German Imperial Navy and finally during the World War took an old windjammer through the British blockade and with it raided Allied shipping in the Atlantic and Pacific, until the ship was wrecked on the coral reef of an island in the South Seas.

With him always is his countess, very young and tiny, blonde and pretty. Beside the great bear of a man she is as alert, masterful, and alive to every situation as he is careless, absent-minded, and of a

simplicity unconcerned with the trivialities of ordered life ashore.

The trial of her life, she tells, is keeping the count dressed in accordance with somewhere near average conventions. He, rather more than is good for him, is inclined to the kind of rig he wore during his years as an able-bodied seaman. She has a favorite woeful narration, told with a piquant accent which you might take for French, although she is a native of Sweden.

"We were just engaged to be married, and he came to our house in Stockholm to meet my parents, who were old-fashioned and dignified. I met him at the door, and nearly fainted. His necktie, my God, you should have seen it. It was a huge thing with a knot like your fist. It was lacquered a fiery, glistening red, and was leather.

"'That necktie, Felix,' I gasped.

"'It's a good necktie,' he exclaimed proudly, as he walked in. 'It's made of leather. It never wears out.'

"I left him there, and ran upstairs to my mother, and burst into tears.

"'All is ended,' I sobbed. 'Mother, I can never marry that man.'

"'What is the matter?' she asked.

"'His necktie,' I nearly screamed. 'You should see that necktie. I bring him here to my home, to meet my parents, and he comes wearing a necktie that is an insult. It is painted red, and is made of leather.'

"My mother called my father. I told him about that terrible necktie.

"'Well,' he said, 'if you picked a man by the kind of neckties he wears you would be a fool.'

"My father always was a very sensible man, and he had a great authority over me. He told me to get one of his neckties and go downstairs and put it on Felix. I didn't think that was right. Should I, just engaged, start to dress the man—so soon! But finally I did what my father commanded.

"I went to Felix and told him what I thought of that necktie. He was very much surprised, and repeated that it was a good necktie. I took that necktie right off his neck and replaced it with a decent cravat of my father's. Felix looked sad when I carried that leather necktie away. I still have it—locked up. I never let him get his hands on it, or he might try to wear it again."

On his lecture tours the countess has particular difficulties on the subject of the Sea Devil's friends.

It is the old familiar theme of a wife and her husband's no-good friends—with additions.

"The kind of people that Felix of mine wants to associate with!" she exclaims. "They are—what do you say?—bums."

They are, preferably, old sailors, with a few truck drivers, dish washers, and all-around hobos thrown in. Jack Tar, climbed to a lofty masthead in the world, can't forget the kind of associates he had of old in fo'c'sle or groggery. After a lecture in a strange town, when the people crowd around the lecturer, the count will insensibly drift toward a few gentlemen of the more jovial and hilarious temperament, and presently they are likely to be sitting around a table somewhere, drinking beer—from which pleasant circle the countess will rescue her sea hero, so that he will be able to make the 7:23 in the morning for the next town on the schedule.

In the country he dresses up in rough khaki and proceeds to explore fields and hills. Barns and stables arouse an insatiable curiosity in him, and if he is missing you are likely to find him inspecting a cow's teeth or rummaging through a pile of harness. Ground hogs interest him profoundly. He will lie for an hour, trying to catch sight of one of them.

He will walk half a mile to find one of their holes, and then he will lie down and talk into it, holding conversation with an animal supposedly hidden in its depth.

"Hello there, Charlie. How's the weather down there? How's your family? Did you have a little schnapps with Fritz last night?"

Once I found him in the midst of hard labor—the Sea Devil and my police dog Boaz on the side of Purgatory Hill, near my home in southern New York State. He was filling in a ground hog's hole with dirt and sticks and stones, quantities of rubble which he was tamping down energetically.

"What are you doing that for, Count?" I asked.

"I will make him dig when he comes out. I want to make him do a little work, by Joe."

A source of entertainment for the Sea Devil is the heir to the family mortgages, Sonny, aged five. In the course of his voyagings as a sailor the count worked as a tent man for Indian fakirs in Australia, and among them picked up some of their sleight-of-hand tricks, which he is never tired of demonstrating. Baffling Sonny is a particularly rare delight. Once the Sea Devil proceeded to vanish knives, forks, and spoons at the dinner table, pretending to swallow

them. It was quite clever, and Sonny was bewildered.

"Come, Sonny," called the count suddenly. "It's your turn now."

"What?"

"It's your turn. I'm going to eat you too."

The infant fled in dire alarm.

On many an evening before the blaze in the fireplace we have listened to the Sea Devil spinning his yarns about the old days at sea. We went for a cruise through the islands of the Caribbean in the big sailing ship which he calls his home, and that was a time for story-telling. I had got the main thread of his career and adventures for my book *Count Luckner, the Sea Devil*, but there are many other tales that he tells of droll events and heavy perils at sea. A gifted story-teller, a man with a magnificent flare and genius as a raconteur, he has cultivated a fund, a treasure hoard, of beguiling sea yarns, incidents of his own life and tales he heard told by old sea dogs in many a fo'c'sle. They were too good not to be taken down, so I gathered a sheaf of them for the Sea Devil to tell on printed page.

He has, after two years in the United States, brushed up his English a bit, but luckily it still retains the highly savored diction of the German who

through the years of his youth sailed on ships in every latitude and learned the international jargon of sailors and the sea. He still leans with undiminished reliance on the priceless "by Joe," which stands for all the profanities of deck and fo'c'sle, the substitute he had to learn when in polite society the blood-freezing oaths of the sailor men came to his lips. That phrase has become almost a name and a characteristic symbol for the jolly count, and, indeed, expresses in brief and figurative form the essential history of the man of title who spent his youth before the mast and then became a naval officer, a war hero, and a social lion.

LOWELL THOMAS

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THE SEA DEVIL'S FO'C'SLE

I

LIGHT YOUR PIPES, MATES, AND PULL UP YOUR SEA CHESTS

You know the fo'c'sle. It is the sailor's home. Maybe you wouldn't think it such a good home if you had to live there. Maybe I wouldn't think so if I had to live there now. But as I look back at my life at sea somehow it seems like the best home I ever had, better than shining salons on big liners, magnificent, expensive hotels, or the castles of my ancestors. Anyway, many times I am in fine places, beautiful places, swell places—dining with kings and emperors and millionaires, with everything rich and glittering. Then I fall to thinking how I'd feel more at home back in a fo'c'sle with the sailors. For there is where everything is natural, and nobody can make a mistake through not speaking in an aristocratic way and not putting on aristocratic airs. You can just let her rip, by Joe! And many's the time I've wished I was still there.

I have seen plenty of fo'c'sles, and maybe I could

be a professor of fo'c'sles if some university would teach that subject. I learned about fo'c'sles early, and had a good lesson on my first voyage. When I was thirteen I ran away from the castle of my father and went to sea. That was when I dropped my real name of Count Luckner and under the assumed name of Phelax Leudige shipped as cabin boy aboard that Russian full-rigged ship, *Niobe*. And by the jumping mill race of Hades, she was a terrible ship. So my first home, after my father's old castle, was the fo'c'sle of a windjammer, the fo'c'sle of the *Niobe*.

It was a black, murky, V-shaped room. Above was a skylight, but so coated over that what daylight did manage to get in was anæmic and sick. At night there was a smoky lamp. The two walls were lined with bunks—ten to a side, in double tiers of five each. In the middle, anchored to the floor, was the table where the sailors ate, and where I got the scraps they left. From the ceiling hung about a hundred stuffed flying fish. Most sailors like to stuff flying fish, but especially those Russians. They were mostly from inland parts, the great steppes, where their peasant neighbors and relations would say you were crazy if you told 'em a fish could fly. So these Russian sailors were all the time stuffing flying fish to take home to

make their folks gasp. They left the eyes in, and painted the fish with shellac, and stuffed them with tobacco. A flying fish stuffed like that gives off something more than a faint aroma, by Joe! And a hundred of them! One man had a shark's tail. Another was trying to stuff a porpoise. Then they were always rendering porpoise oil, and that was enough to blast your nose right out by the roots, it was so overpowering. They oiled their boots with porpoise oil, and burned porpoise oil in the fo'c'sle lamp. Then all the boots were kept standing under the table. Forty sea boots. Those sailors didn't know what it was to wear stockings, and Russian sailors are not clean people. Those sea boots had not only the smell of porpoise oil. And when fifteen or sixteen of those Russian sailors were in the fo'c'sle at the same time, then it was something. They never liked to have water on their bodies. They were caked with dirt, but at certain times each one had clean hands. That was when their skin would shed. Those burly old bearded sea dogs would peel the crusty skin off in strips and then they'd have clean hands.

Then there were the rats. When the sailors were through eating, and I had eaten some of the scraps, then the rats crawled on the table after the crumbs.

One night I woke up with a rat sitting on my face. I didn't know what it was at first. I was dreaming of home and I thought it was a swallow. Just the day before we had been near land and flocks of swallows came on our deck and in our rigging. They were pretty birds, and I liked them. And so when that rat sat on my face I thought it was a swallow that had got into the fo'c'sle. I wanted to catch a swallow and make a pet of it. I put my hand out, and then I found I had a rat in my hand. It bit me and jumped away.

On the walls were pictures painted by the sailors—pictures of ships—and some were very good. And there were ship models, fine ones, hanging with the pictures. On the wall, too, were many pairs of dirty pants. When the ship rolled, the pictures, ship models, and pants all would rustle together. The sea boots under the table would rock to and fro and begin to walk. The timbers creaked as the ship labored, and loud was the clanking of the anchor chain at the bow. On the beam that stood near the table were many mirrors. Every sailor had his own mirror hanging there. Sailors like to look at themselves. They spend hours looking at themselves in their mirrors. Those mirrors would shake and twinkle as the ship rolled.

That was the fo'c'sle of the *Niobe*. That was my

first home at sea on that long, bitter voyage from Hamburg to Australia. It didn't give me a good impression of fo'c'sles, by Joe. But just the same it was while I lived there that I learned to love the sea, and I remember that place with the terrible smell more vividly than any battleship ward room or any grand salon of any liner that I've ever crossed the seas on. From the old *Niobe* I went on from one sailing ship to another, from one fo'c'sle to another, some dirty and some clean. But no other was as dirty as the *Niobe's*. And cleanest of them all was the fo'c'sle of the *Cæsarea*.

We had to roll out at four in the morning on the *Cæsarea*, and the first thing we did was to sandstone that fo'c'sle from top to bottom, table, floor, walls, and everything. After each mess we cleaned the dishes, but not the way you'd think. We had swabbers, dry swabbers for the knives. We didn't wash knives on ships in those days. It wasn't allowed, because, you see, the salt water would make the steel rusty. We made swabbers out of the thread of canvas, and each was used only once. Each day we made three swabbers for the three meals. It was clean on the *Cæsarea* all right, but so much cleaning, by Joe, so much work! Sometimes I used to sit and remember

the smell of the fo'c'sle of the *Niobe*, and it did not seem so bad. The work was so much less, and there hadn't been any of all this cleaning business.

In the *Cæsarea's* fo'c'sle only two or three big flying fish hung from the ceiling, while on the walls, besides the paintings of ships and ship models, pictures of sweethearts, mothers, fathers, and all the family. That's the way with German sailors, and it makes their fo'c'sle seem more like a home.

Then there was the *Golden Shore*. She was an American ship, and her fo'c'sle was what you would call cozy. Already in my day the American sailing ships, once the worst hell of all for sailors, were beginning to make life easy at sea. In the fo'c'sle of the *Golden Shore* we even had a stove. It was warm and snug. On other ships stoves were not allowed, because, the skippers said, it makes the sailors catch cold. Better for them to freeze in an icy fo'c'sle than to go from a warm fo'c'sle and catch cold on the icy deck. So, when you were in northern latitudes the fo'c'sles were ice boxes to make frozen sailors. I don't know about the cold. I never had one on the *Golden Shore*. Maybe it was the expense the old-time skippers were thimking about and not the colds.

Yes, and I've even been in Chinese fo'c'sles, and

funny places they are. Sailors of all latitudes have sea chests—no going to sea without a sea chest. The Chinese sailors have sea chests made very fine and beautiful, of camphor wood. The bunks are low, and the Chinaman creeps in, and his bunk has a door which he closes, so he won't be disturbed. Instead of spending their spare time making ship models, Chinese sailors carve lovely delicate little things out of the stones of fruit.

All over the world, in every sea, on ships of all nations, if you are a sailor you will have a homelike feeling in the fo'c'sle. There is something the same about all of them, always the small snug room with bunks along the wall and a table in the middle. There are never any chairs. The sailor does not sit on a chair at mess. He sits on his sea chest. You see them all around the table. The sea chest means everything to a sailor. The things he loves best are in it. He eats and works sitting on it. And he sits on it when he spins a fo'c'sle yarn.

You always find animals in the fo'c'sle sailors' pets. Parrots are awful. They talk and screech and then talk some more, by Joe. They make noise all the time. Sometimes you find monkeys. They are good fellows. I always liked monkeys. Once we had one

that made trouble. It was on the *Niobe*, among those Russian sailors who hated water. In every fo'c'sle you will find a bucket of water, drinking water, hanging right above the table, swinging just under the skylight. It is up where the air comes in and keeps the water cool and fresh. It appears to swing as the ship rolls, but really it doesn't swing at all. It's the ship that does the swinging. Well, that monkey got thirsty one mess time and decided to have a drink out of the bucket of water. So he made a jump at it. He caught hold of one end of it and tipped it over. The water poured down over him, and he hung on there, wet and swinging and screeching. But that wasn't the worst for him. The water splashed down on the Russian sailors, and they beat poor Jocko and he screeched so loud his relatives must have heard him away off in Africa.

Sometimes there is a dog, usually the captain's dog. But the animals on ships are mostly cats, for nearly every sailor has one. The cats catch the mice all right, but they don't fool with the ship's rats because the rats are too big and fierce. The cats sit around the fo'c'sle at mess, and the men throw food to them. Or maybe the cat is perched on the man's shoulder. At other times you will see the cats sitting on the

sea chest. It is funny, but your cat will sit only on your sea chest and not on any other man's. Your cat goes on watch with you, sitting beside you or perched on your shoulder. The cats like to stand watch with you at night, because cats love the night. The cat sleeps in your bunk. You like to have it sleep there, too, because it gets into the bunk first and makes it warm. That feels good, by Joe.

There are always new cats coming aboard, because cats on sailing ships do not live very long. They suffer much in the tropics, and there is no milk aboard for them. They get biscuit and sometimes condensed milk. There is a big time aboard when some cat has kittens. She will not have them in the fo'c'sle. She goes off somewhere, usually in the rope locker or the sail locker. The cat is wise. All the sailors go and look at the kittens. The owner of the mother cat is there, watching proudly, and he does a little profitable business in cats on the side. "What will you give me for one of the kittens, Charlie? Fritz, by Joe, what will you give me for one?"

So that's the fo'c'sle, and there's where you hear the best stories. It is finest on long nights of rain, when it's not too cold and when it's dry and snug in the fo'c'sle, and men tell of their experiences. Of course,

the best story-tellers on board do most of the yarn spinning. Some of them are masters at the art.

It's a long time since those days when, a runaway boy, I was a common seaman before the mast, living the hard life at sea. But here I am spinning yarns in a fo'c'sle again—anyway, let's call it the fo'c'sle. There are the bunks. The table is in the middle, and above it and under the skylight is the bucket of water, swinging as the ship rolls. Look at the fine pictures on the walls, pictures of ships that sailors have painted, and the ship models and the stuffed flying fish. But it's not the fo'c'sle of the *Niobe*, and we don't have to hold our noses. Instead we have the fine smell of rope and tar, with now and then just a little whiff from a flying fish that a sailor has not stuffed right.

So, light your pipes and draw around on your sea chests, and I'll tell you a few stories out of a sailor's life.

II

WE STOLE THE EGGS AND THE CAPTAIN KILLED THE ROOSTER

THE captain of the *Niobe* was a funny old codger, with his goatee like Napoleon Third and his mean disposition. He was lame, too. He had some trouble with his foot. In Chile once he was unloading a cargo of cattle. They were driving the cattle along a gangplank and he was on it. One bull got mad, and the captain had to jump into the water. He was crushed against the side of the boat and hurt his foot. Therefore he limped. The home port of the *Niobe* was in Finland, and the captain was a Russian Finn. His name was Peter Sundell. The Russian sailors called him *Perue* Sundell, which means "Devil."

He never talked to the sailors. He only talked to the mate and to his parrot—and to the mate only to give his orders. He used to sit on the poop deck, knitting with a big knitting needle. He used to knit stockings and sell them to the sailors. The sailors

had to buy them, or they would have a bad life on board. The captain can make a bad life for a sailor, by Joe, especially that old Russian devil. He used to fish for sea gulls and albatross, too.

There has been a superstition that it is bad luck to kill an albatross, but when I was a Jack Tar the sailors caught the bird whenever they could and used him for the big tail and the feet. The tail is wonderful to give to your girl to put on her hat, and the feathers of the breast are wonderful for lining ladies' coats. The skin of the feet is wonderful for tobacco pouches. You take the skin off the feet and dry it, and each foot makes a tobacco pouch. The beak is wonderful, too, for the handle of an umbrella for the ladies.

You catch albatross, and sea gulls too, with a small triangle made of brass or tin. You have this on the end of a long line and it has corks which make it float. In the middle of it is a piece of meat for bait. The albatross puts his big curved beak in the middle of the triangle to get the bait, and you give the line a pull and his beak gets wedged. Then you haul him in while he flaps with his big wings and tries to fly away. The devil captain caught hundreds of albatross and sea gulls. He wanted their feathers. He had been collecting feathers for years.

"One day I will get married, and my wife can make me a feather bed," he said.

The *Niobe* had been a passenger ship long before, in the old days of sail. She had a big cabin. That was where the captain stowed the feathers. He had the cabin full of feathers for that feather bed. I don't know if he ever got married, or what kind of wife the scoundrel could get.

Somebody told the captain that if you want to live a long time—and he did—you should eat eggs. Maybe there was something in the idea. On shipboard sailors have mostly salt meat and beans and peas and things like that; maybe these don't have what you call vitamins, and maybe eggs do. Anyway, the captain decided to eat eggs and have a long life. He got several hens and a fine old rooster so that he could have fresh eggs aboard. He said to himself he would have maybe three eggs a day and sometimes six—but he didn't know much about chickens.

He would be sitting on the poop deck, talking to his parrot, knitting and fishing for sea gulls and albatross. He was waiting for eggs. Sometimes he would hear a hen cackling, and he would go running, but there was no egg. Weeks passed, and he didn't get any eggs.

"By Joe," he says, "what's the matter?"

The other cabin boy aboard was a Swedish fellow, a little older than I, the son of a farmer, and very well informed about chickens. He could tell just when a chicken was going to lay, and he and I used to watch and wait. The chicken house was amidships, and when one of the chickens was about to lay an egg we would sneak in, pick the bird up and squeeze the egg out. That chicken would go—*kkkkk-kut-kut-kut-uh-kut, kkkkk-kuk-kut-kut-uh-kut,* and then the captain would come running, thinking there was an egg. But no.

"By Joe," he says, "these chickens don't lay any eggs!"

Meanwhile the other cabin boy and I would have gone forward, and we would eat the egg raw. No chance to get it cooked, for the cook and the mate, like the captain, were waiting for the time when the chickens would begin to lay.

More weeks went by. "By Joe," said the captain, "that old rooster, he's good only for soup!" So he rubbed his stomach, and thought about rooster soup. One day the rooster was perched on the spanker. He was sleeping and taking it easy, with one leg up. Then a little breeze came. *Pfff!* went the sail with

a flap, and the rooster tumbled off into the sea. The captain saw it—"Oh-oh-oh—my rooster, my rooster soup! How can I get my rooster back?" And he came running, midships, roaring, "Man overboard!"

The sailors rushed to their stations, shouting, "Where is the man? Where is the man?"

"It's the rooster," howled the captain. "My rooster soup!"

The men put out the boat and went after that bird. Now, a rooster can't swim, and when he falls overboard he turns aft end up. He scuttles upside down. That rooster was just about drowned when we got him.

"Put him in the pot right away," the captain said to the cook.

And so the delightful smell of rooster soup went all over the ship, and the sailors sniffed. I sniffed, too, and I couldn't help following my nose. I watched with my mouth watering while the cook boiled that rooster in the soup. Then the captain sat in his cabin eating it. I couldn't help hanging around the cabin door sniffing.

"Phelax, you like chicken?" the captain asked.

"Oh, yes, Captain, by Joe, I like chicken very much."

He slapped himself on the paunch.

"Me, too," he said, and took another big bite of drumstick.

That old son-of-a-gun asked me if I liked chicken! You know what it is to be long weeks at sea and then get the smell of fine rooster soup. By Joe, it was too much. That old devil captain, he was a real Sea Devil if there ever was one.

When we put into port at Fremantle, Australia, the captain bought another rooster; and he made sure it was a good one. I don't know how he got along for eggs after that, because I deserted the ship and never saw the *Niobe* or her captain again.

Sailors are honest men, but stealing food aboard ship is all right, only sometimes you get caught, by Joe. The British full-rigged ship *North Star* put into her home port of Plymouth, and the men were paid off and went ashore. But I didn't want a stay on shore—I didn't know Plymouth. So I asked the captain if I could remain on ship.

"All right, Phelax," he said, "you can stay on board. There is no work to do, but you can clean my cabin."

"By Joe, that's good," I thought. "The skipper always has something in his cabin, maybe prunes, maybe some sugar." The captain of the *North Star*

had a big tin of sugar in his cabin, and I had to put sugar from the tin into his sugar bowl. Every day I did it, and filled my pockets, too, for sailors don't get any sugar at sea.

Then one day the captain looked at his tin. "Say, Phelax, you like sugar?"

"No, I don't like sugar, Captain."

"Well, by Joe, the sugar is getting low."

"Oh, no, Captain, I don't like sugar, I never did like it."

"Phelax, I trust you. Maybe you don't like sugar, but then I don't like sugar any more myself. Don't put any more from the tin into the sugar bowl. Don't touch the tin at all."

"All right, Captain, you can trust me," I said. But I thought, "What is to keep me from taking some sugar out of the tin anyway?"

So I took a little, not so much as before. But, by Joe, there were flies in the tin, and when I opened it they flew out.

Next morning the captain called me. "Did you take any sugar out of the tin?"

"Oh, no, Captain, I don't like sugar."

"Did you open the tin? Phelax, did you open the tin?"

I remembered those flies. I had to think fast. "Yes, Captain," I said, "I opened the tin. You see, there were flies in it, and I had to get them out."

"You could see the flies?" he asked, and I began to edge away. "You could see them from the outside, through the tin, by Joe! I put the flies in to catch you, and now I have, by Joe!"

I was ready to go, and I ran fast. He chased me off the ship.

That was how it was in the old days of sail. You were always liable to be caught stealing, by Joe. Anyhow, I was.

When I came to America three years ago, on a good-will mission for my country, it was my own sailing ship. I was the commodore on board. My skipper on that voyage was the same Captain Adolf Koltzau who is with me now. He is an honest man. I told you sailors are honest men, and he is the most honest sailor. I found that out twice, once not so long ago and another time many, many years ago. By Joe, it was funny.

When I was preparing for my first voyage to America after the war I was looking for a ship. I wanted to buy a good craft that would sail well, hold her nose in the wind, and know how to behave in a

bit of weather. In Hamburg I was looking over a big four-master. The captain was trying to sell her to me for thirty thousand pounds. I thought that rather expensive. Then the mate took me aside and talked to me. He had heard about me. I was well known in my country.

"Count," he says, "the captain is trying to do you. The ship is not worth that much money. It is wrong to overcharge people, especially an officer who did something for his country in the war."

"You are right," I replied. "I thought, myself, that thirty thousand pounds was too much. You are an honest man."

We were looking at each other. His face looked familiar to me, and my face looked familiar to him.

"Don't I know you from before, Count?" he asked.

"I can't remember," I said.

"Tell me, Count," he was thinking hard, "weren't you on the full-rigged ship *Cæsarea?*"

"The *Cæsarea*, by Joe. Yes, I was on the *Cæsarea*. I was Phelax Leudige, the sailor boy."

"And don't you remember me, Count, Adolf Koltzau, the mate?"

"By Joe, yes, I remember you."

We stood there looking at each other and remem-

bering the *Cæsarea*. That was something to remember. Well, I knew already that here was an honest man, and now I knew it all the more. I was thinking about those prunes.

I love prunes. I like to eat them raw. Maybe now that I can eat plenty and whenever I want to, I don't love prunes so much, but when I was a sailor boy and getting little to eat at sea and always hungry, a dried prune was to me what a fat worm is to a chicken, like champagne. On all ships I was hungry, but on the *Cæsarea* I was the hungriest. That skinflint captain believed a sailor could have all the nourishment he needed by tightening his belt. Then, when the cook deserted, I was made sea cook for a while. By Joe, that was good. I could eat plenty, and in the galley was a big bag of prunes. All day I ate prunes. That skinflint captain didn't like that.

"By Joe, Phelax," he said to me, "you leave those prunes alone."

He was a clever fellow, and so he spread a thin layer of sugar over the prunes in the bag. You couldn't take a prune out without it showing in the covering of sugar. That was bad.

I tried to think of a way to get the prunes without being detected. If I only had some sugar I could take

the prunes and spread a new layer. But sailors didn't have any sugar at sea, and, besides, if I had had any sugar I would have eaten it. But I was a smart boy. I took my jackknife and opened the seam down the side of the sack, and took out all the prunes I wanted and then sewed up the seam again. I did it cleverly, and the prunes just settled down, and the covering of sugar was undisturbed.

The captain had a good eye. The sugar was all right, but he saw that the prunes were lower in the sack.

"By Joe," he says, "how can it be? The sugar has not been touched, but somebody is stealing the prunes."

He was puzzled. He couldn't understand what was the matter with his prunes. He went about asking, trying to find out. He was sure I must be the thief, but did not understand how I could have done it. Then it was that the mate, Koltzau, spoke up.

"The prunes are getting dry, Captain. By Joe, they are getting dry and shrinking."

He was an honest man. He couldn't believe that anybody on board would steal. He didn't think I would steal. He was always thinking that everybody was as honest as he was. But then he always did have

funny ideas. Whenever anything turned up he had a funny idea. And now he thought that *dried* prunes were drying and shrinking. Ho, ho!

The captain said he was a fool. That skipper always believed somebody was stealing. But Koltzau had an obstinate mind. Whenever he got one of his foolish ideas he stuck to it. He liked to argue. He was always sure he was right, and liked to prove it. The captain was going around trying to find out how the prunes were stolen, how I could have stolen them, and all the while the mate was arguing with him, proving that those already dried prunes were drying and shrinking. And in the end, sure enough, he convinced the captain, and the captain thought the prunes were drying and shrinking.

"Phelax," he said, "maybe you didn't steal those prunes. Maybe you are an honest boy."

And so I saw I would be able to take some more prunes out of the seam in the sack, and between that and the prunes cooked in the galley the sack didn't last half as long as it should have lasted.

When I met Koltzau those years later I told him about the prunes. By Joe, how we both laughed! I took him out and we had many glasses of beer.

Later on, when I got my ship the *Vaterland*, I needed a skipper.

"By Joe," I thought, "Koltzau is just the man. He is a good sailor, and an honest man, too, if there ever was one."

You need an honest skipper on a ship, and so I took Koltzau. He navigated the craft to the United States, through the Panama Canal to the Pacific Coast, and then back to Germany. Now he's on the bridge with me once more. And whenever we have prunes we still laugh, by Joe.

I had a friend, Nauge, and we were shipmates on half a dozen voyages. He was a good friend to have. Whenever there was stealing to be done Nauge was sure to be in it. He had good ideas and was always looking around for a chance to get his hands on something that didn't belong to him.

"By Joe," I said to myself, "this Nauge understands many ways of filling an empty stomach." And, as I always had an empty stomach, I kept on the best of terms with Nauge. We got into lots of trouble, but we managed to get our jaws into plenty of fine stuff, too.

The worst trouble came in port at Newcastle,

Australia. We had a good cargo aboard of expensive food and cognac. The customs officers came aboard and examined the cargo and sealed it. They sealed every hatchway leading to it, and you would have said that cargo was perfectly safe, and nobody could get at it without breaking the seals. They overlooked one thing, and that was a ventilator near the pumps and the mainmast. It had the top taken off and was covered with canvas.

"By Joe," Nauge and I said to each other, "*there* is a road to many good things."

And so at an hour after midnight we were at that ventilator. It was big enough for a man to go down. I tied a rope around my waist and crawled in, and Nauge lowered me into the hold. By Joe, what a treasure was down there: big hams, bottles of conserves, good cigarettes, Tuma cigarettes, I remember, and cases of cognac. I untied the rope from around me and tied hams, conserves, boxes of cigarettes, and bottles of cognac to the end of it, and, one after another, Nauge hauled them up.

While this was going on the skipper came along on deck. He saw what Nauge was doing and sneaked up on him.

"You son-of-a-gun, by Joe," and he took Nauge

by the back of the neck; and that skipper had strong hands. "So, you are stealing out of the hold that the government has sealed. And I know who is down there. It is your pal Phelax. Now you stay right there and keep quiet."

We were just getting up the cognac, and I was tying it into the rope down below. The skipper pulled the bottles up. He just kept pulling up until there were twenty-four bottles on deck. Then it was time for me to come up. I tied the rope around my waist and the skipper started to pull me up. He got me halfway and then made the rope fast. I was left hanging there. He got the fire hose. In a minute I was drowning.

By Joe, and when that flood of ice-cold water came down I thought the ship was sinking and the sea was pouring through the ventilator shaft. Then I thought that Nauge was trying to drown me so that he could have all the ham and cognac for himself.

"Nauge, by Joe," I hollered, "please don't drown me. You can have the cognac. I don't want a drop of it. Please let me live, Nauge. I don't want to die."

I don't know if they could hear that above, because I was burbling and gurgling in the water that was flooding down. Stuck there in that narrow ventilator

shaft, with the fire hose shooting water down, I was swallowing water, inhaling water. That devil of a skipper kept it up until he thought I was half dead, and then he pulled me out.

"You sons-of-guns," said the skipper, "take this stuff you have stolen to my cabin. I have to keep it there."

And we had to carry all that fine stuff to his cabin. Then the skipper said to us:

"By Joe, boys, do you know what it means to steal? It is a sin, and this is Australia. Do you know Australian police, and Australian jails? They are terrible, by Joe. You have done wrong, but I have a heart. I don't want to have you put in these awful Australian jails. I will protect you, boys. I will not say anything. I will not tell the police. You keep quiet, boys, and nothing will happen to you. But if you say anything the police will find it out, and you will get maybe ten years or maybe twenty in the Australian jails."

By Joe, we were glad. The skipper was so wonderfully kind. He let us off, when such terrible things could happen to us.

"Oh, thank you, Captain," we said. "We will not steal anything any more. You are so good to us,

Captain, that we will do anything for you. There never was such a big-hearted skipper on the sea."

The big-hearted skipper just said once more:

"Keep your mouths shut, boys. Don't say anything."

We kept our mouths shut, you bet, and didn't say anything. We felt like worshiping the big-hearted skipper. We learned later why he had been so good to us. The reason why he did not have us put in jail was that if he had said anything he would have had to give up the hams and bottles of conserve and boxes of cigarettes and bottles of cognac, and replace them in the hold. He kept them himself, hid them in his cabin. How could anybody know they were missing? The cargo was sealed with the official government seal, and nobody could possibly say that anything was missing. He ate and smoked and drank on the sly. He used our stealing, the old a-son-of-gun, by Joe, to keep for himself all that good stuff—and the twenty-four bottles of cognac.

And so in those early days at sea I was always thinking of stealing—and always thinking of home.

III

THE TWO KNOTS ON TANTE MIMI'S HEAD, AND WALKING THE TIES IN QUEST OF BUFFALO BILL

THE happiest day at sea was the day when the mail came, but for me it was the saddest. Everybody but me got letters from home. I had the best home of all, but I had left it, and my family did not know where I was. The ship would put into port, and now the captain would go ashore for the mail. Everybody was watching him. Everybody was hoping. We had been out on the high seas for four or five months, and in the last port no mail came. The sailors are all hungry for letters from home. They hang at the rail, waiting for the skipper to return. Now, here he comes. Everybody watches his face. He is smiling. He has a big package.

"Hey, by Joe, there is plenty of mail," the word goes around.

The sailors are crowding around. Charley, Fritz, Dick, here's something for you. You see a man look-

ing long at an envelope, studying the handwriting. He recognizes it, but he wants to be perfectly sure before he opens the letter. The men disappear. Each one with his letters goes to some corner, maybe into his bunk, where he pulls down the curtain. He doesn't want to be bothered. He wants to have solitude, so that, while reading a letter, he can be in close communion with the beloved one. You see a face change with happiness or grief, as a letter is read. You hear a murmur and a mumbling and a grunting. The sailors like to talk to themselves. They are used to talking to themselves, standing alone at the wheel on the long night watches. He will call you crazy, by Joe, if you tell him he talks to himself, but still he talks to himself. And now they are reading their letters out loud to themselves, maybe muttering or maybe loudly, and they are speaking their thoughts, too—"Fine, by Joe, fine"; or "Oh, by Joe, this is awful, this is terrible." Then they talk to each other about the news they have had, telling how things are at home with family and friends.

You hear all kinds of news, good news, bad news. One sailor's poor old mother has died. Another has a sister whose husband is always drunk. Or you hear: "What does your cousin Charley say?" "Fine, by

Joe, he is a bo'sun on that English ship; he gets nine pounds ten." Another is telling everybody that his sister has married a captain. It is something to be the brother-in-law of a captain. Two men will walk up the deck and down the deck for a long time, while one is telling his friend about the news he has had, what has happened at home, something good or something bad, and what his feelings are. And over there a man sits brooding.

They all have letters from home, but not poor Phelax. He stands there full of regret. He stands there watching. He listens to what is said. He studies the faces of his comrades, trying to see in their expressions what news they have from home. He is very glad if somebody comes to him and discusses things at home and asks for his opinion—"Now what do you think, Phelax?" or "What would you do, by Joe, if you were me, Phelax?" And poor Phelax, he takes delight in explaining his ideas about the case of his friend's Uncle Fritz or sister Magda.

Maybe once in a while I would get a letter, but not from home. Mary of the Bluebell at Newcastle writes that I forgot my pocketbook when I saw her the last time. She is an honest girl, and she tells me about it. She was hard up and used the money that

was in it, but she would feel guilty if she did not tell me about it. Or maybe it is a letter from a friend. An old shipmate writes, saying that he is sitting in the calaboose. He was drunk and got into a fight and they gave him thirty days. He has to carry stones, by Joe, and it is an awful job. He is thinking about ships. He has had enough of life on shore for a while. The only good about that jail is that his cell is so small it reminds him of his bunk aboard ship. He is looking forward to the time when they will let him out and when he will get a ship again.

By Joe, I should have liked to have a letter from my parents or brothers or sisters or cousins. I should have liked to have a letter from Tante Mimi. Ah, Tante Mimi, I used to think of her a lot. *Tante* in German means aunt, and Mimi is a chic French name, but Tante Mimi was neither my aunt nor chic. She was a wizened, dried-up old lady who was a friend of my grandmother's. They said she had been a big woman once but had shriveled up. She was all wrinkles, and they had made her small, as the wrinkles, when you push an accordion together, make it small. My father did not like Tante Mimi. He said she talked too much and made my grandmother talk too much. My father was a stern man, and when he

was at home Tante Mimi stayed away. He had business, however, which caused him to travel, and as soon as he would leave the house on a trip my grandmother would invite Tante Mimi to stay at the house while he was away. She would send the carriage for Tante Mimi, and all day they would sit knitting and talking.

The two old ladies were timid by nature, and were always talking about the terrible things that happened in the world. We lived in an old castle that had been my family's property for generations, and it was a grim and spooky kind of place. My grandmother and Tante Mimi were always afraid that robbers and burglars would steal into the place at night while my father was away. One Christmas good Santa Claus brought me a big box of building blocks. They were made of stone, and heavy, especially a big stone arch that was the most important part of the set. When Tante Mimi came to visit us the next time some robbery had been committed near by, and the two old ladies talked about it all day long. Then at night they were nervous. They thought they needed some protection.

"*Ach, Gott in Himmel,*" said Tante Mimi, looking at me playing with the building blocks. "If you threw

that box of stone blocks on a robber's head it would finish him."

My grandmother thought it was a good idea, too. So she took the box of building blocks and put them in her room, ready to hurl them on a robber's head. A steep stone stairway led from her room down to the main hall, and it was down there in the main hall that the robber would presumably be.

At midnight everything was dark and silent in the old castle. Then my grandmother was awakened by a sound. Robbers, she thought. She went to her door and listened. Somebody was coming up the stone steps. They were coming to murder her, she thought. She took that box of building blocks and heaved them down the stairs.

"O-o-o-o- . . . my head . . . o-o-o-o!"

"*Was ist los?*" she yelled.

"My head . . . o-o-o-o."

It was Tante Mimi. She had been out of her room and was on her way up the stairs when the shower of stone blocks came crashing down on her head. She thought she was killed, and my grandmother did, too. Everybody was aroused by the racket and came running, and all the time Tante Mimi was going "O-o-o-o."

"My poor Mimi"—my grandmother was weeping —"look at the top of your head."

Tante Mimi couldn't look at the top of her head very well, but she could feel it. You know that old women have little hair on their heads. Tante Mimi always had her small supply coiled in a little tight knot. Now she had two knots. The big stone arch of the building blocks had cracked her on the skull just beside the knot of hair, and it had raised another knot just about as big.

"My poor Mimi," my grandmother wailed, "you have two knots now." And she did have two knots, by Joe.

Then my grandmother ran for a cold knife and put it on that second knot on Tante Mimi's head, and began to flatten it out.

"O-o-o," said Tante Mimi.

After that Tante Mimi was always afraid of those building blocks, although maybe she might have been willing to take a second knot on the top of her head again. You see, my grandmother gave her five pounds for the suffering she had undergone. Tante Mimi was poor, and five pounds is worth a lot of suffering.

They were two funny old ladies, but they were always good to me. They couldn't handle me at all,

and allowed me to do anything I pleased—especially Tante Mimi. She would do anything rather than have me start to howl and scratch and kick and spit. On the high seas I often thought of her. I used to sit laughing to myself and remembering the two knots on Tante Mimi's head and how she went "O-o-o-o." Sometimes when I was aloft in the rigging I would think how fine it would be if a ship sailing close by us had my parents and my grandmother and Tante Mimi aboard, and they would see their boy up in the rigging, a strong sailor boy, fearlessly setting a sail, and so high above the deck. They would be proud of me there and much impressed with my ability. And my grandmother and Tante Mimi would say, "If he should fall down—o-o-o. *Gott in Himmel*, how brave is our Felix."

But no such ship ever came along, and it was only a daydream—like my dream of Buffalo Bill.

On an early voyage across the Pacific I landed in San Francisco, and I said, "So this is America, by Joe." I had always wanted to see America, because it was the home of self-made men. I figured I would have to be a self-made man because the teachers in school all said they couldn't make anything out of me. I couldn't learn anything, and they said that

I would surely turn out to be a bum. I kept thinking about that. When I was working aloft in the rigging or was coiling rope on deck or listening to some accordion player making music on his "squealer" in the fo'c'sle, I was always thinking about how the teachers, when they tried to teach me something out of those books, said I would be a bum.

"Phelax," I thought, "if study makes a bum out of you, by Joe, you have got to be a self-made man."

Well, here I was in America and I saw the people around—all self-made men.

When I was a boy I often heard about Buffalo Bill—and he was a self-made man. I read a book about Buffalo Bill, how he hunted buffalo and fought Indians. I admired Buffalo Bill, and I felt that as long as I admired a man like that I would never be a bum. I would be inspired to do great things, as he did, and become a self-made man, as he was. So when I was in San Francisco I asked some fellow on the street:

"Where is Buffalo Bill?"

And he said: "How the hell do I know?"

I asked other people, and they told me that Buffalo Bill lived in Denver. I didn't know the way to Denver, but somebody told me.

"I will show you a way you never can miss," that

man said. "See the railroad track there? That is the road to Denver. Just walk the ties, and they will take you to Denver."

So I took the ties and found Denver a long way to go. I walked thousands and thousands of ties. It is not easy to walk the ties. If you watch them they dazzle your eyes, so many of them, endless ties. It is best to walk them at night, when you can't see them so much. It takes a special feeling to walk the ties. You make a step just so long, just far enough to make every other tie. Sometimes at first you get discouraged—you find it impossible to walk the ties easily and with comfort. You keep on trying. That is the way to succeed. It is as I said to myself when I was walking the ties: "Keep trying, Phelax, keep trying, by Joe, and you will learn to walk the ties just as you learned to go aloft in the rigging." And I will say this—any man, if he tries hard enough, can learn to walk the ties.

Sometimes a brakeman or a fireman let me take a ride on a train. Or maybe a farmer gave me a ride in his wagon. But mostly it was the ties. I went to the farms along the railroad and got food. Sometimes I could steal some corn or a chicken, and sometimes I worked for something to eat. The farmers always had

a job for a hobo to do, maybe to chop wood or clean the stable. They made you work hard, by Joe, but they gave you something to eat. In those days, twenty-five years ago, there were not so many people in the West as there are now. In some places there were no farms; the farms were far apart. Then it was bad. Hunger is a thing I never liked, and I was so hungry, by Joe! Sometimes I would have to walk twenty miles before I could get something to eat.

Five weeks after I started out I walked the ties into Denver. "So this is Denver," I said, "the home of Buffalo Bill. Now I will see him, and I will tell him that he is a self-made man and that I, too, will be a self-made man." By Joe, I felt good. I was only a tramp, but I felt as great as the Kaiser. I wondered what Buffalo Bill would say if I asked him to let me ride with him and hunt buffalo over the plains of Colorado. I had never seen a buffalo, although I had traveled across the western part of the American continent. When I was walking the ties I kept my eyes open, looking for buffalo. I thought maybe the buffalo keep away from the railroad track—they don't like the look of the ties. But there must be buffalo somewhere, and Buffalo Bill was just the

man to tell me all about them. Anyway, here I was at the home of my hero, and now I would see him.

I went to Buffalo Bill's house, and my hand was trembling as I knocked at the door. A woman answered. I don't think she liked my looks. Maybe she had not much sympathy for tramps. I spoke, and she answered me with a sharp tone of voice.

"Can I see Buffalo Bill?"

"Maybe, but not here. He is not here."

"When will he come back?"

"Maybe next year."

"Where is he?"

"In Germany. He is with his Wild West show in Germany."

"Well, by Joe," I said. I had left my country with the hope of seeing Buffalo Bill, I had sailed around the world and walked the ties for twelve hundred miles, only to learn that Buffalo Bill was in my own country. "That is a joke on me," I thought, although I couldn't see much of a joke in those thousands of ties I had walked to get to Denver and the thousands of ties I would have to walk before I got anywhere else. Years later I learned that Buffalo Bill's circus had given a show in my home town of Dresden and that Buffalo

Bill had been a guest at the house of an uncle of mine. The way for me to have seen Buffalo Bill was to have stayed at home and kept on with my studies.

Denver is a fine city, but it was far from the sea. I was a sailor. On land I was a bum, but on the sea I was a sailor. I thought, "Which is the best port to get a ship?" And the best port was New York, eighteen hundred miles away. That is a long distance to walk on the ties. The way back to San Francisco was not so long, but I didn't want to see it again, and thought I might as well see as much as I could of America—the land of the self-made men. And so I took the ties for New York, bumming a ride when I could and stealing something to eat or getting handouts at the farms along the way. A few months later I was in New York. Most Americans don't realize how great their country is, only those that have walked across it on the ties.

In New York I couldn't get a ship right away, and panhandling in New York isn't as good as hoboing it in the country. I got a job in a lunch room washing dishes, but that was not a very refined place. Then I got a job at one of the best hotels. It was the Majestic on Seventy-second Street and Central Park West. There I became a door-knob shiner, and I was in

contact with the best people in the country. I saw them go by while I was shining brass. It was a great inspiration. I saw your Vanderbilts, your Morgans, your Rockefellers, and I said, by Joe, all self-made men. Only self-made men could make an impression on me. I looked at these great Americans and was convinced that they had never passed an examination.

And now, twenty-seven years later, I always stop at the Hotel Majestic when I am in New York. It gives me a good feeling to live at the place where I got so much inspiration, and it is wonderful to look at your old door knobs and have a chat with your successors. But I hear they have just sold my old Majestic to tear it down and run up one of your towering skyscraper hotels. So maybe I've greeted my old door knobs for the last time.

I never did meet Buffalo Bill, although I traveled far and wide and sometimes crossed his trail. Recently I visited his tomb in Denver up on the edge of a mountain, where you have a magnificent view of the plains, and I made a donation toward building a monument to the man who gave me so much hope when I was a sailor boy at sea and a bum on land. I met Johnnie Baker, Buffalo Bill's adopted son, and we had a long talk about the old scout of the plains.

I am sorry I never had a chance to tell that great old patriarch of your last frontier how much he did for me in the days when my teachers told me that I was sure to be a bum.

My search for Buffalo Bill was not the worst possible experience on land—not the worst for a sailor. Jack Tar often had sad misadventures on terra firma. In every port there was a calaboose waiting for the sailor.

IV

JAILS I HAVE KNOWN, AND A BATTLE ROYAL IN AN ARGENTINE SALOON

I HAVE had plenty of experience in jails. The old-time sailor was often in jail. Not that he was dishonest. He never steals on shore, except when he is hungry, nor from his mates on board ship. He steals something to eat out of the galley—that is all. On shore they steal from the sailor. There are land sharks, and all their lives they think of nothing but ways to swindle the sailor. And they can think of tricks, by Joe. They tell you they have swindled somebody out of a watch, and they sell you the watch cheap, and then you find they have swindled nobody else but you.

You see a fifty-dollar bill on the street, and just as you are reaching for it the land shark is reaching for it, too. You think you should have half of it, and he thinks so, too. But he has no change. You give him twenty-five dollars, and he gives you the fifty-dollar bill—and it's no good. By Joe, I have been swindled

many times. They should put the land shark in jail, but, instead, you find the sailor in the dungeon. Maybe, after working hard at sea, he has had a little refreshment ashore. The old-time sailor always liked to get drunk. Maybe he got into a fight. There were plenty of fights. Or maybe he tried to desert his ship. There were many reasons for putting a sailor in jail.

My prison experience was unusually large, because I was not only a Jack Tar in my time but was also a war prisoner during the World War. First I was in a New Zealand internment camp. Then I escaped, was recaptured, and then put into a real prison. The worst jails are in South America, or maybe in Australia, where they have barracks built by the convicts in the old times. The best jail I was ever in was Sing Sing in New York. That is a fine place, by Joe. But I was there only as a visitor.

You find different kinds of people in jail. The best are the ones who have a lifetime sentence. The lifers are good fellows. They have settled down. They feel quite at home, and by the time they are there many years they have more privileges than the others. One of the lifetimers has the library, another one has the dispensary with the castor oil and the medicines, the next one has the clothes. They know their busi-

ness. They have much time to learn it. They are familiar with the place. It is the only place in which they have any interest. It is the only place where they will ever be in this life. The worst people are the ones that have two, three, four, a few years. They are always counting the days, anxious, discontented, like a workman who watches the clock. They think, "Soon I will be out and see Charley or Fritz." They have no interest in the jail. They think only of themselves.

When you talk of jail you think of fights, because it was fighting that most often got sailors into jail. And I have seen some fights. I've had a few myself. I remember when I was an ordinary seaman aboard the *Cæsarea*. I was no more than a big kid; a good sailor, but in other ways awkward and stupid. We had a deck cargo of wood. There was lumber everywhere. I was carrying a big bowl of pea soup along the deck from the galley to the fo'c'sle. And then the ship rolled. I stumbled against some lumber, tripped over it, and down went the pea soup all over my pants and all over the deck. By Joe, it was hot. Up came the second mate. He had a long beard.

"You dirty pig," he said, and he hit me in the face.

I would never think of fighting with a mate, but I

didn't think when I got that punch in the face. Scarcely knowing what I was doing, I caught hold of him and pressed him down between the bulwark and the deck cargo against the rail. He struggled as hard as he could, but his body bent as I twisted him. He seemed so weak. He was a big strong fellow, young and active. I couldn't understand why he was so weak.

"Phelax, don't do it," he grunted, all out of breath, as I crushed him down harder. "It is not right for a mate and an ordinary seaman to fight."

I knew it was the truth. An ordinary seaman should not fight with a mate. I let him up.

"Phelax," he said, brushing off his clothes with his hand, "you have done wrong, but I will say nothing. Don't you say anything, either."

He was a good fellow and knew he shouldn't have hit me, and, anyway, he didn't want me to tell how I had put him down. I didn't say anything, but I kept on wondering—how could that big, strapping fellow be so weak? What I didn't know was that I was so strong.

I had plenty of chance to find out how strong I was some time later. By Joe, that was a fight! There was a sailor! He was big, and he was strong. He was the

giant of the ship, and always fighting and always giving somebody a licking. He owed me thirty marks. It was for a picture. In Australia there were special photographers who made pictures of ships. Nearly every ship has been to Australia, and the photographers had pictures of nearly all ships. You put into port. The photographer comes aboard and shows you a fine picture of your ship. It is in fine colors and has a gold frame. The picture costs three or four marks to make—the gold frame looks fine but is very cheap—he asks one pound ten (thirty marks). A sailor loves his ship and also a picture of his ship, and, anyway, he is only looking for some place to spend his money. He buys the picture. That is the way this big sailor, the great fighter, came to owe me one pound ten. A photographer in Australia had sold me a picture of our ship and sold him one. He didn't have the money to pay. I paid it for him, and he said he would give it back to me at the next port.

When we got to the next port I saw him leaving the ship. "He will spend all his money ashore," I thought, "and I won't get my one pound ten." So I ran after him and asked him for the money.

"No, Phelax," he said, "instead of the money I will let you have the picture you paid for."

"I don't want the picture," I replied; "I have one myself."

"Well, then"—he was beginning to be annoyed—"you can get the money from the captain. I have money coming."

I told him I did not like that way; it was not the honorable way. "If I am to get the money from the captain," I demanded, "you go to the captain with me and tell him to give it to me. Come along, let's go to the captain."

He didn't like that business of going to the captain. It had a strong effect on him. He slapped me on the side of the head. By this time I was an A. B. and he was only an ordinary seaman.

"By Joe," I said to him, "don't forget that I am an able seaman and you are an ordinary seaman." And I hauled off and hit him.

Then there was fighting. It was the kind of fight you often saw on deck, only stronger. Several sailors came up to watch. They were not surprised, merely pleased.

There was always plenty of fighting aboard the old sailing ships. If a row started in the fo'c'sle one man said: "Come on deck, and we'll see who's right."

And so they would go on deck and have it out. They would slug each other with their fists and would wrestle. There was no knicking or biting or hitting with a weapon. That would not be fair. A man goes down. The other fellow lets him up, and they go to it again. Maybe there was dirty fighting among some sailors, but what I saw was usually clean. The other men would crowd around watching the fight and cheering the fighters. They were like referees. Then the mate would come running.

"Hey, boys, stop. By Joe, don't smash your noses to pieces. We have no doctor. Come on, Charley. Look how you are bleeding. Come on and stop."

He would stop the fight, not because he thought it was wrong, but because there was no doctor aboard. He did not want anybody killed or crippled, because they were nearly always short-handed on the old sailing ships.

And so that sailor and I fought, with bone-breaking blows and savage falls on the deck. It was a hard fight. That fellow was strong. I got plenty in the face, and I gave him plenty. I had to be strong to withstand him. It surprised me that I was able to give him a fight. I knew I must be strong.

Just then the first mate came running up.

"What's going on here? Somebody will be put in irons, by Joe."

I told my story and said I was right. The other fellow told his story and said he was right. I don't know which one of us the mate would have believed, but just then he spied a clothes bag on the deck. Now a clothes bag means everything to a sailor. He keeps everything in it that he hasn't got in his ditty box. When he makes it he cuts it a little longer than his own height, so that he can get into it. It is of double cloth and is waterproof. The only man who can take the ties in the right way is the sailor, because he has his clothes bag. If he has no money for a boarding house and has no place to sleep, he gets into his clothes bag for the night and uses his clothes as a pillow. A sailor can never get hard up because he has his clothes bag. If he goes to another ship he takes his clothes bag with him. If he runs away from his ship, the first thing he thinks of is his clothes bag. And if you see a sailor sneaking his clothes bag off ship, you know he is going to desert.

"Whose clothes bag is this, by Joe?" hollered the mate. "Who is trying to run away?"

It wasn't mine, and the other fellow didn't say

anything. The mate looked into it and saw to whom it belonged.

"Ha, so it is you who wants to travel. Well, by Joe! You are a good boy, Phelax. You should give him some more."

Then he went to the police ashore. It was in Australia, and the police there were specially trained to punish sailors who tried to desert their ships.

"One of our boys wants to travel," the mate said to the police. "Maybe you better take care of him and keep him safe until we are ready to sail."

In Australia they were always glad to keep sailors who wanted to desert their ships in jail until their ships sailed.

"All right, we'll take care of him," the police said to the mate, and they got that sailor and put him in the treadmill.

In Australia the treadmill was very important in the jails. They have little water in that country, and they used to use the treadmill for pumping. It is a huge big wheel with steps. The men walk on these steps, as if climbing them, and of course the wheel goes around. You stand on the floor and away up the side of the wheel you see the men, sometimes two, sometimes half a dozen. There is a wall at their backs,

and the mill is so constructed that if they don't keep climbing fast enough they get a bump. They all have to climb at the same speed. If one makes the wheel go faster the others have to keep step, and maybe the one going fast has more energy and sprier muscles than the others. He goes fast, and the others get mad.

I remember two sailors on the *Pinmore*. They were enemies, and it happened that each intended to travel. They told on each other, partly for revenge and partly to have the favor of the mate and in that way make it easier to travel. And so both were put in the mill. Each knew the other had told on him, and that made them worse enemies. And one was younger and stronger than the other, and he made the other travel fast in the mill, too fast. The poor fellow kept bumping and bumping, and he was mad, by Joe. When they got back to the ship they right away started to fight and tried to kill each other. And they were put in the mill again. And again the younger one made the other one travel fast. I saw them there. It was funny.

I used to go to see the treadmill all the time and say hello to the boys up there. I could stand for hours watching. It was wonderful to see. It was a good show.

I never got in the mill, myself. I said, by Joe, it is fun to watch, but it is no fun to be climbing, climbing up there. So when I was anywhere near Australia I behaved myself. Nowadays there is no more treadmill in the jails in Australia. It is too bad. The treadmill was wonderful.

Trying to desert ship was an important reason why sailors got in jail in those days. The police in the big ports had the duty, according to law, of taking care of sailors who wanted to travel, and they took care of them by putting them in a cell. A captain could always have any of his men he wanted locked safely away in jail until he was ready to leave port. Seamen always liked to desert and ship on Yankee vessels. There they had plenty of hard work but also plenty of good food. German sailors liked hard work and good food, and so on American ships you found many German sailors—and Swedish sailors, also. On English ships they had plenty of work—and very bad food. The cooking on British ships was awful. And then there was a law that compelled sailors on British ships to drink lime juice. For that reason they were called lime-juice sailors. On German ships they were very economical about the food, but the sea cooks were good. On the British ships for soup they use

water. That soup tastes like nothing. On German ships there was always a box full of ham bones. The captain ate ham, and the sailors got the bones. The sea cook puts a ham bone in the pea soup, and that makes it taste wonderful, by Joe. Anyway, it was natural for a sailor to desert once in a while, and that was one of the reasons why he got a chance to see the inside of jail.

Once I saw about a hundred sailors in jail. It was a great sight. And they were there for something, by Joe—the biggest fight I ever saw. I will never forget that fight. Bang, how those chairs and tables were broken and shivered on sailors' heads! Bang, how those beer steins came crashing around! If you love a fight you would have loved that one. Those sailors should have been given the Iron Cross, the Croix de Guerre, the Victoria Cross, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Instead, they were put in jail. But then, everybody loves to put a sailor in jail.

Near Buenos Aires there was a big eating and drinking and dancing place for sailors. Any Jack Tar in harbor went there. The tables were made out of ship's timbers. There were big booths. Over one was the British colors. Over another Yankee colors. There were the colors of all nations over the booths,

and each sailor, like a good patriot, went to the drinking booth of his own country. In the middle was a big space for dancing when there were girls, or it made a fine space for fighting. That sailors' resort in Buenos Aires was fine—plenty of beer, plenty of schnapps.

There was a British ship in harbor, and aboard was a Norwegian, a big fellow who had had some trouble with the British. He had had a fight, and they had knocked him down, and he was mad and said, "By Joe, I'll get you on shore sometime." Anyway, the sailors got shore leave and all went out to that resort. And there at night they were sitting and drinking. The place was crowded with hundreds of sailors. The British were in the quarters for the British, where the Union Jack hung, and the Norwegian chap was with the Norwegians. It happened that the British and Norwegian quarters were next to each other.

That Norwegian sailor was telling other Norwegians what a rotten time he had on that British ship, by Joe, and the Norwegians all spoke up and gave hell to the British. In another booth near by were some Italians in the Italian quarters, and they heard what the Norwegians were saying and sympathized with them. They gave hell to the British. The British

were replying, and giving hell to everybody. Between the quarters of the nations were partitions eight feet high, and pretty soon a Norwegian threw a glass of beer over at the British, and the beer splashed all over the limeys. The British said, "What the 'ell do you think this 'ere place is?" and threw beer back. Then the Italians threw some beer over at the British. Then they started tossing the beer steins over the partitions. I was with the Germans, and we were next to the Norwegians, and a couple of glasses landed among us. We say, "What's the matter, by Joe?" and throw some glasses over. Pretty soon beer steins were flying all over that place. They hit the oil lamps, and the lights were out. We were all in darkness, and the fight was on. The whole big crowd was fighting. You couldn't tell who anybody else was. All you could see was something in the darkness. Everybody hit everybody else. Tables and chairs went smashing down on heads. Fists were hitting and feet were kicking. And the beer steins exploded like shells when they hit, and glass went flying everywhere.

There was one German sailor, the biggest man I ever saw, I think, and the strongest. He was more than six feet and a half high, and before he hits you it's time to say your prayers. He jumped to a window

and tore off half a blind—they have heavy green blinds on the windows in that place. And into the fight he dashed, out in the darkness in the middle of the floor, and he thrashed away with that blind—terrible blows. And all the time he hollered "*Hummel, hummel.*" Every time he saw a dim form in the darkness he would raise that blind for a tremendous blow and holler "*Hummel, hummel.*"

That was a special call we had in those days on German sailing ships. Suppose a German ship was in harbor, and a British ship came in. The German sailors would call over, "*Hummel, hummel.*" And if there were any German sailors on that British ship, they would call back "*Mors, mors.*" I'll tell you why that was. Some place in Germany in the old times there was a dance hall where sailors liked to go. Now, it was forbidden to dance in the daytime, but sailors always like to dance. So they danced with the girls in the daytime and were careful that the police would not catch them. There was a water carrier named Hummel who was always outside, and they used to call to him, "*Hummel, hummel,*" to find out whether there were any police near. He was a learned man, although only a bum, and if everything was clear he would call back, "*Mors, mors.*" *Mores* in

Latin means "customs," and I suppose he meant by that that everything was in order. I never was much of a scholar, especially in Latin, but I think that is the way it was. Anyway, it became a custom on German ships to call out if there were any Germans around, "*Hummel, hummel,*" and the reply was "*Mors, mors,*" which was the way the sailors said the Latin "*Mores.*"

So that big seaman with the blind for a club would call "*Hummel, hummel,*" and if the man in front of him hollered "*Mors, mors,*" that meant he was a German, and he didn't get hit. But if he didn't reply "*Mors, mors,*" he got an awful crack on the head with that blind and was stretched out on the floor. And so the fight went on, colossal, yelling and cursing, crash, bang, smash, and over the infernal noise constantly, "*Hummel, hummel,*" and maybe "*Mors, mors,*" or maybe a terrible bang, as somebody got the blind on the head. There was one British sailor who had sailed on German ships, and he knew the cry. He heard "*Hummel, hummel,*" in the darkness, and hollered back "*Mors, mors,*" as loud as he could, and he got away without feeling the hardness of that blind.

I don't like to fight under such circumstances. If

I fight I like to do it some place where I can see, and not in the darkness. And I didn't like those beer steins that were flying around. You might lose your eyes. I didn't want to be around that flying glass. I thought it would be best to be sheltered from it. So I got into a corner and crawled under a big oak table. It was good shelter, but just the same some of that glass came scattering under there.

The fight was going on, with plenty of "*Hummel, hummel,*" "*Mors, mors,*" and I was under the table, when—*clackity, clackity, clack.* It was the Argentine police galloping up on their horses. "By Joe," I thought, "Phelax, you'd better get away. You saved yourself under the table, and now you don't want to go to jail." I started for a window.

"*Hummel, hummel,*" I heard right in front of me.

By Joe, and that blind was ready to come down on my head.

"*Mors, mors,*" I hollered as loud as I could. "*Mors, mors,* by Joe."

The giant had heard the horses of the police, too, and he was on his way to a window. We went out together. The drop was fifteen feet. I knew how far it was and was ready for it. But, by Joe, there was a shed there, and the drop was only a little more than

seven feet. You know what it is to be ready to drop fifteen feet, and you hit at only seven feet. By Joe, my legs were stiff when I landed on that roof of the shed, and I was almost knocked out. That *Hummel, hummel* giant let himself down by the hands and then dropped. He was so tall that his toes were almost touching the shed roof when he let go. He was a little bit surprised. That's all. He gave me a shake to get me going again, and we escaped.

Most of the others were still fighting when the police came in. That stopped the fight right away. Sailors don't like to fight police. That is bad business. They know from experience it is no use to fight the police. Especially, they don't like to fight the Argentine police. Those fellows are little men, but they are active and skillful. They used to carry lassos, like the cowboys have. They are very expert with the lassos. They lasso you like a steer. There you are brave and strong, and in a minute you have a rope around you. It is not good. And they drag you away at the end of a rope. Maybe they might ride away to the jail on horseback and drag you along behind. A sailor does not like that. So the police arrested everybody in the hall, and they caught a lot who escaped through the windows, as "*Hummel*,

hummel" and I had. That night and the next day they looked all over Buenos Aires for beaten-up sailors, especially those with damaged heads, with big lumps on their heads, with the marks of the green paint of the blind on their heads. And they put everybody in jail except some that went to the hospital. One man was cut about the face something awful. Another had his stomach slashed something awful. The Norwegian that started the trouble was kept in prison for a long time.

There never were so many sailors in the jail in Buenos Aires before. That whole jail was nothing but sailors. I walked around on the outside, and at every window you could see sailors looking through the bars. By Joe, it was funny. I stood there and called, "Hello, Charley, hello, Fritz," and kept on laughing.

The story of that fight I told in many a fo'c'sle. It is good to have strange or tremendous things happen. They make good stories to tell, additions to the repertory of the sea.

V

IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT, AND THE PILOT WAS A GHOST

Among old-time sailors you heard repeated over and over a few stories that were classics, traditional legends. If you were a landlubber shipping on an American schooner bound for New Zealand, some old tar, likely enough, sitting on deck on a bright afternoon or in the fo'c'sle during a storm, would tell you one of the old ones. It was part of your nautical education. The next time you might hear it on a German full-rigged ship bound for Buenos Aires. All the old-timers seemed to know those familiar yarns, and you would hear them over and over. You never got tired of them, but smoked your pipe and listened and at times chimed in with your own contribution, swearing the tale was as true as a well-built ship, or adding a detail or two that the other fellow had left out. And they were good stories, by Joe. It was a pleasure to hear them.

Luckner and a young friend, the son of the author.

Windjammer ahoy!

One of the commonest—I heard it scores of times —was about a ship that was sailing in southern seas. It was a wonderful tropical night, the kind a sailor loves. The tropics between 25 degrees north and 25 degrees south are paradise for the seaman. There are no storms, but always the same weather and always the same winds, the northeast and the southeast trades. The helmsman was standing at the wheel, steering a southwest course. The mate was sitting on deck, looking at the stars and at the swell of the soft wind in the sails.

Suddenly somebody gave the helmsman the order, "Steer south-southwest." And the helmsman put the wheel over to south-southwest.

In a little while the skipper comes on deck to look at the compass and see that the helmsman is steering the right course.

"Say, where are you steering, by Joe?"

"South-southwest, as I was told."

"By Joe, I told you to steer southwest."

"Yes, but somebody else told me to steer *south-southwest.*"

The captain asked the mate whether he had given the order to change the course, and the mate said no.

"You were dreaming, by Joe," and the skipper

gave the man at the wheel plenty of hell. "Steer southwest, by Joe, and don't change the course, by Joe." The helmsman steered southwest, and the skipper went back to his cabin.

Half an hour later the helmsman heard the order again: "Steer south-southwest." And he steered south-southwest. Pretty soon the skipper came on deck again and looked at the compass. "By Joe, you changed course again. Is this mutiny?"

"I was ordered to steer south-southwest," said the helmsman.

"By Joe, put another man at the wheel!" The skipper was having stormy weather in his brains. "Get away from the wheel, by Joe, you son-of-a-gun. Charley, you take the helm, and steer southwest, by——!"

And Charley took the helm and steered southwest.

Pretty soon somebody came up to him in the moonlight.

"Steer south-southwest," the man ordered, and Charley steered south-southwest.

The captain came on deck again, and then it was "by Joe" all over the place. Charley kept saying he had been ordered to steer south-southwest. The man in the moonlight had given him the order.

"Well, by Joe," and the skipper began to think. What could it all mean, this steer south-southwest business? Maybe there was something mysterious, something supernatural in it.

"By Joe, Charley, all right. Steer south-southwest."

And Charley kept on steering south-southwest.

The next morning they saw something on the horizon. By Joe, it was a boat. Men aboard were waving. The ship steered toward them. There were twelve men who had been adrift for days and were dying with thirst. They were taken aboard. One man was unconscious. He had been unconscious for two days. The skipper of the shipwrecked men told the captain:

"He is not dead, but his soul has been away somewhere."

Then Charley, who had been at the helm the last time the mysterious order was given, saw the face of the unconscious man. He was frightened. The feeling of mystery overwhelmed him.

"By Joe," he told the captain, "that is the face of the man who told me to steer south-southwest."

And when that man came back to consciousness he told them, yes, his soul had been away, and it was he, as a ghost, that had given the orders—steer south-

southwest—so the ship would shape a course to find him and his mates.

If you told a sailor that that story was not true he would get angry. And I think it was true. Sailors are superstitious, and they are right. They have the experience on the sea and plenty of time to think and get the right thoughts. There are many things of mystery in this world, and the sailor, he understands them best.

Another story was told over and over. I believe it happened on the China coast. There was a skipper, and his Chinese Number One boy had been with him for twenty years, had traveled all over China waters and in the South Seas with him. After all these years the Chinaman saw that the skipper was having awful trouble. You could see it in his face. The old man was worried. He couldn't be happy any more. He never laughed. The Chinaman knew it was because of money. The captain owed debts that were oppressing him. So the Chinaman said:

"Captain, me got some money. You takee pay debts. Me no need."

But the skipper said: "Don't be a fool, China boy. I need four thousand marks to pay my debts."

He didn't think the Chinaman had as much as

four thousand marks. But he had more, and that Chinaman he smiled to himself. I will surprise the captain, he thought, and he telegraphed for all he had saved in fifteen years. It was ten thousand marks, and when it came the next day he was going to give it to the skipper. It made that Chinaman happy to think that he could do this good thing.

The next morning the watch found two slippers on the poop deck. They were the captain's and were close together as if he had just stepped out of them.

One of the sailors went down to the Chinaman.

"Where is the skipper?"

"He sleep in cabin."

"What about his slippers at the rail of the poop deck?"

The Chinaman jumped out of his bunk and ran aft to the captain's cabin. The captain was not there. The Chinaman ran to the slippers. Then he noticed the sounding line overboard. They hauled in the line. At the end they found the skipper's body with the hundred-pound sounding lead around his neck.

"Oh, oh," howled the Chinaman, "me got money to pay debts. Me got money to pay debts. Captain he jump overboard. Oh—oh."

The watch ran forward to tell the mate of the cap-

tain's suicide. The mate got out of his bunk as quick as he could and ran aft.

By Joe, no captain. The skipper's body was not there. Where's the Chinaman? What did the Chinaman do with the skipper? No Chinaman. Then they noticed the sounding line lying on the deck. By Joe, where is the sounding lead? No sounding lead. They dragged the bay with grappling hooks and brought up the sounding lead, the skipper, and the Chinaman. The Chinaman had cut off the sounding lead with two fathoms of rope, had lashed it around himself and the skipper's body, and had jumped overboard with them to die by the side of his old master.

I heard that story many times, once from men who had served on that ship and under that skipper. He was an English captain. The ship was the four-masted bark *Palmyra*. We lay with her at the same time in the port of Caledabuena, in Chile.

In the East you hear much about the fidelity of Oriental servants. Maybe an English sahib in India has a native servant for a long time and is good to him, and that Englishman goes away to England, intending to stay for a few months, and he tells the servant to wait for him. Then the Englishman changes his plans and stays in England maybe for years, and

he forgets all about the servant. In time he goes back to India, and when he lands, by Joe, there is the servant standing on the dock. The servant has heard in those roundabout ways that you find in the East that the sahib is coming back, and he is there to meet the sahib as if only months, instead of years, have gone by.

And Oriental sailors, too, have the greatest devotion. Not long ago there was the case of a Japanese ship that was disabled in a storm, a fearful typhoon. She drifted for days and then went on the rocks of the Japanese coast. There she lay, breaking up. The surf was immense, half a mile of it before the shore could be reached. It seemed impossible for men to live through it. The only way was to get a life line to shore, so the men could pass along it. A Korean sailor volunteered to swim through that boiling surf with a line. The others said he couldn't do it, that he would surely drown.

"I'll go," he said, and he went overboard with the line around his waist.

The others waited while the rope slowly payed out. They expected it to stop every moment, showing that the Korean was drowned. But the line kept paying out, slowly, slowly, inch by inch. Finally, after a long

time it did stop. They pulled. It was fast. It must be fast to shore. The sailors started making their way along the line. Two were swept off by the giant waves and were lost, but the others continued to the end. They reached shore. And there they found the body of the Korean. Beaten and bruised by the sea, he had fought his way to shore. It was terrible, too much for bones and flesh to bear. He crawled on the beach and made the rope fast. Then he collapsed and died.

Here is an old joke often told at sea. There was a steamer with a run on the China sea. Her steerage was always full of Chinamen, and Chinamen are awful liars. One day a Chinaman died in the steerage. The skipper didn't like those regular funerals at sea. According to regulations the ship must stop, the body must be sewed up in a canvas bag, the skipper give a prayer, and they must solemnly consign the body to the bosom of the ocean. It is fine, but it takes time, it delays a voyage. And that skipper did not like to delay voyage—especially for a dead Chinaman. So he said to the steward:

"By Joe, Charley, that steerage passenger, that Chinaman number fifty-three, has died. Throw him overboard at two o'clock in the morning without any bother. I will write in the log that the funeral was held."

"Aye, aye, sir." The steward was an old sailor who when he got married became a steward, and he was very good at obeying orders.

The next morning the skipper said:

"Charley, did you throw that Chinaman number sixty-three overboard?"

"No, sir, you told me Chinaman number fifty-three."

"If I did I made a mistake."

"Aye, aye, sir, you told me fifty-three."

"Say, by Joe, did you drop fifty-three overboard?"

"Yes, sir."

"But, by Joe, was he dead?"

"He said he wasn't, sir, but you know what liars these Chinamen are."

One story well known among all kinds of people and much written about is that of the *Marie Celeste*. It is one of the most puzzling mysteries of the sea, and, by Joe, you can rack your brains a long time thinking about it. I am sometimes asked what I think about the strange affair, what explanation I can suggest. I have my guess, and I will tell you about it.

The *Marie Celeste*, a staunch, sound sailing vessel, weighed anchor out of New York on October 7, 1873,

bound for Genoa with a cargo of alcohol. Four weeks later she was found midway between the Azores and Lisbon, sailing about on the sea like a crazy ship, as if there was nobody at her helm. And there was nobody at her helm. She was deserted. Her sails were set. Everything aboard was in order. The pumps were dry and the cargo intact. The last entry in her log was dated eight days before. The longboat was gone. On a table in the cabin were a vial of medicine, some pieces of cloth, needle, and scissors. On the floor lay a naked cutlass.

For some reason the *Marie Celeste* had been abandoned on the high sea, and there was no sign of the people who had sailed aboard her from New York. These were her skipper and his wife and two-year-old baby, two mates, and a crew of five men. Time went by and there was never a word from any of them. Much investigation was made, but the mystery of the *Marie Celeste* was never solved. All kinds of guesses were advanced. From time to time various supposed explanations have been made.

One is that a platform had been rigged up off the bow for swimming and that all hands were on it when it broke and fell into the sea and all were drowned. Another is that the skipper of the *Marie Celeste* had

formed a plot with another skipper. All hands would desert the ship and the second skipper in his ship would find her and collect good money for salvage. This, then, would be divided between all that were in the plot. It was supposed that the second had failed to find the deserted vessel, hence the *Marie Celeste* drifted abandoned. Another theory is that tropical heat generated fumes in the cargo of alcohol, and this, drifting up above decks, seemed like smoke. The skipper, thinking the vessel afire and afraid of his explosive cargo, gave the order, "Abandon ship." All hands took to the boats, and these were lost.

My guess is one that must often have been made, but I think there is no reason for any other. There were a couple of fellows aboard of bad character. They were not well treated. Maybe the skipper had been severe with them. You know, in the old days the American sailing ships were famous for brutalities aboard. The seamen were roughly handled. It was the day of the bucko mate, who laid about him with a belaying pin on nearly all occasions. These two fellows, good friends perhaps, formed the idea—a familiar one in the history of the sea—of killing everybody aboard and taking the ship for themselves. It is an easy thing to do at night. They sneak up on the

watch on deck and knock them down with belaying pins and throw them overboard. Then they go below and kill the sleeping people there and throw them overboard. They have the ship, but soon they realize they can't navigate her. They know where they are. They know where the nearest land is—not far away. They are skillful at handling a small sailboat. They take one of the ship's dories, rig up a sail, and steer for shore. Maybe they get to land, or maybe they don't. If they do they will keep their mouths shut and say nothing, or they will be hanged for mutiny and murder. If they are caught in a storm and sink, well, the ocean will cover their secret.

Medicine and cloth were on the table in the cabin of the *Marie Celeste*. That seems as though there had been bandaging. Maybe there was a fight aboard. The naked cutlass on the floor also looks like some kind of disturbance. These indications might mean other things, also, but they do fit in with what I think is the inevitable theory—mutiny.

These are old stories of the sea, often told in the most vivid language. The language of the fo'c'sle always had plenty of spice. The swearing was colossal. But it was not always oaths and blasphemy. Sometimes it was praying.

VI

THE SEA DEVIL DISCOURSES ON PRAYER, AND THEY SAILED THE SEA IN A COFFIN

YES, there's no doubt but what I've done more than my share of swearing. It seems to go with life at sea. But I also have prayed many times in my life. That goes with the sea, too. And there are times when it is good to pray. Suppose the mainmast has gone overboard and the typhoon is driving the hulk of your ship on the rocks. Then you should pray to God. Because when you are scared, fight if you can, run if you can, swim if you can, crawl under a table if you can, but if you can't there is nothing to do but pray. The sailor understands these things. He is naturally a religious man. The immensity of the sea and sky, the giant terror of the storm, these things enlighten him, and he constantly thinks of religious things—often he is swearing and sometimes he is praying, and if he does it out loud often you can't tell just which he intends it for, swearing or praying. Maybe a tough old windjammer gets a pious, religious

atmosphere if enough masts have gone overboard and the combers are smashing the bulwarks hard enough. In a moment like this, maybe, if you have leather skin and are salt-bitten, you may laugh and joke at the praying, but just the same your heart may be touched.

The Christian religion is a good thing, because it provides prayer at the right times in life. At a baptism, for instance, it is well to pray for the baby that has been born. Once you are born you need prayer. Prayer is also needed at a wedding. And so I have prayed plenty, by Joe. I have been in shipwrecks, and aboard my raider during the war I looked into a British cruiser's guns—and then I have been married twice. I have survived these dangers, for which I thank the good God.

On the old sailing ships there were always some men who could be depended on to pray plenty when things began to look ticklish. These religious men were a valuable element. They made the others realize that this mortal life of ours was not all cursing and swearing, but was also sometimes praying. I have known many of these pious sailors, and whenever I think of prayer, or whenever I am praying, there comes to my mind an old sailmaker who was a ship-

mate of mine on the *Pinmore*. He was a praying barometer.

His name was Charley Martin, and he was an old lime-juice sailor from the east coast of England, with a wonderful sailor's face. He had tobacco juice in his face. He had a beard that should have been white, but was brown, brown with tobacco juice. His skin was like some kind of wrinkled leather, browned by years at sea and tobacco juice. He had marvelous teeth. They were like fine chestnuts, so brown. For forty years or more he had colored them, biting into plugs of tobacco. Charley always said that tobacco juice was good for the face. It kept the moths out of the skin, and your beard would not be gray, and if your teeth were like chestnuts with tobacco juice you would never need to go to a dentist.

Charley had sailed on all the seas and aboard all kinds of ships—sailing ships. Charley was so much the perfect, salty figure of a sailor that he would have been out of place on a steamer, he would have shocked people when they looked at him, and, besides, he was a sailmaker, and you don't need sailmakers on steamers. You can get along on steamers with landlubber hands who know nothing of seamanship. In his long life at sea Charley had learned all about nautical

art and science, especially the language. He could be a professor of language. He was a connoisseur of the hard lingo of deck and fo'c'sle. How he could swear, by Joe! I learned much from him.

I was a young seaman and was anxious to improve, to go ahead in my profession. And I learned about cussing from Charley. I used to sit and listen to him while he reeled off a string of oaths, and I remembered them. I was no good in school learning grammar and history and mathematics, but I was not so stupid when it came to learn how to swear. I was a scholar. With a teacher like Charley the stupidest lubber could learn. To this day I have to say "By Joe" whenever I feel something strongly, to take the place of something else that might make respectable ladies curl up and die. It is a result of sailing with that profane old sailmaker from Hull, Charley Martin.

Maybe Charley is sitting on deck mending a sail, and somebody comes along and disturbs him.

"You son-of-a-gun, what the hell do you want? What the hell's the matter? What the hell's going on? By Joe, well, by Joe."

At mess when the grub was not good, which it seldom was, then it was "By Joe" from Charley. As a sailmaker he had his own little cabin, and was not in

The Sea Devil and the ship's cat.

Rolling down to Rio.

the fo'c'sle, and at night you could hear Charley in his cabin talking to himself. He liked to talk to himself, and his talk was always swearing.

"By Joe," you would hear him say to himself, "what the hell, by Joe."

And so that old lime-juice, tobacco-juice sail-maker was always swearing—but only when the weather was fair. When the storm was blowing it was, "O Lord, oh, the Lord is good," and so on, and Charley didn't swear any more. No more "hell" and "by Joe." Instead, Charley was praying.

"Come, good Lord, come and help us," he would pray, and when there was an extra hard blast of wind it was "O Lord, O Jesus, O God, O Lord." And with the other sailors he was wonderful, so nice, so religious. "Come, boys, be careful, don't go too far out on the yard, hold fast and God will help you. Please, don't swear like that, boys, don't be wicked, but always pray to God. Be good, boys, the Lord will save us."

And he would get out his Bible, which you never saw except in a storm, and would read out of it and preach. "The Lord, He reigneth, and you will be saved." It was wonderful how religious Charley got when the storm was blowing, and people would have

said, "Here is this good and pious man among all these scoundrels. He is praying and they are laughing. They are wicked men, they will go to hell, by Joe."

When the storm is over and the sun is shining again, you hear Charley sing out: "That was a hell of a weather, by Joe. It was blowing like hell, wasn't it, you sons-o'-guns—you sons-o'-guns, by Joe. This old son-of-a-gun of a ship was rolling like hell, by Joe." Charley was himself again. His Bible was kicked into a corner, and he was giving everything "by Joe"—until another blow came along.

And so Charley Martin, with tobacco in his face, was a praying barometer. He knew in advance when a storm was coming. His rheumatism told him. Somebody would notice that Charley had stopped swearing and was beginning to pray. "By Joe, mates, Charley is getting religion. The barometer is falling. We are in for a blow." And the word would go around. "Look smart for a bit of weather. Charley feels a storm coming. He is united with Jesus Christ again. He is a friend of God again." Everybody hated to hear Charley pray. When he started to pray everybody started to curse. It was different when Charley started to swear again. That meant the storm was over and there was fair weather ahead. Everybody

said: "Listen to all that hell and 'by Joe.' Charley is united with the devil again. A clear sky and a fair wind, and all hands setting the topgallant sails."

The sailors said the skipper ought to throw the barometer overboard and set the sails by Charley Martin's language.

That profane old sailmaker used to tell a wonderful story about a prayer. You have heard of the maiden's prayer, the prayer of a little child before going to sleep; well, this is about a skipper's prayer. It was a wonderful prayer, a long prayer, so pious, so full of religious words and feelings. I can still see that dyed-in-tobacco-juice old sailmaker sitting there and mending sail, and shooting long streams of tobacco juice over the rail, and telling the tale of the skipper's prayer.

He had sailed aboard an old windjammer on a voyage from San Francisco to Australia, and for weeks the weather was stormy, and I guess for weeks Charley Martin was praying. It was still blowing nasty when the third mate fell out of the rigging and broke his back. He lingered for a while and died. They prepared to bury him at sea.

"Oh, no, Captain, no, by Joe," said the ship's carpenter, who was a brother of the dead mate.

He didn't want his brother to be thrown to the sharks of the Pacific. There were islands of the South Seas in easy sailing distance, and he begged the skipper to steer for one and give his brother a decent Christian burial ashore. The skipper, already held up by the bad weather, did not want to delay, but the ship's carpenter told him persuasive things.

"If you bury my brother ashore and give him a Christian funeral, by Joe, the blessing of God will be on the ship. If you do this Christian thing, Captain, we will meet no more storms, we will have fair weather all the way to Auckland, we will have favorable wind. We will have good luck and fair winds. It is the truth, Captain; it is a religious truth."

What that skipper needed was good luck and fair winds, and a sailor is always trying to find a way to get these two things. It is the study of his life. The carpenter talked so much and had so many arguments that the skipper, hoping to get good luck and fair winds, agreed to steer off his course and bury the carpenter's brother ashore with a fine, solemn Christian funeral, a good-luck funeral. And so he set a course for the nearest island of the South Seas. Maybe it was one of the Marquesas or one of the Society Islands.

The carpenter was very busy, working, oh, working hard. He was building a coffin for his brother. It was a wonderful coffin, big, because it was for a big man, made of thick timbers and built up high to be solemn and ornamental. It was almost like a church when he got through with it. The skipper was busy, too. The captain of a ship is also a parson in a way, although sometimes he is a terrible fellow to be a parson. He performs baptisms, weddings, and funerals, and is the skipper and pilot of prayers in general. At this good-luck funeral ashore the skipper would naturally preside, and he was of the belief that a good-luck funeral should be done right. He was the one who would deliver the prayer for the deceased. He wasn't much experienced at prayer, that old sea dog of a skipper, but he was a good man at heart. He believed in God and knew that prayer was pleasing to God when the time comes. He didn't know how a prayer went, but he was determined, nevertheless, to create one that would be worthy of any bishop, worthy of the good-luck funeral. He had an old Bible aboard. He didn't know what was in it, but he knew it was the Good Book in which he believed. He got it out and looked through the pages and found many things that would go well in a prayer.

So with sayings out of the Bible and things that came into his own head he made up a prayer. He wrote it down on page after page, because his memory was not good, and rehearsed in his mind how he would read it off, so solemn, so religious, at the good-luck funeral. It was a wonderful prayer, very long and full of devout thoughts and good words that would touch the heart, a prayer such as only a skipper could make up, a sailor who had sailed on many seas and had learned about God from the immensity of the waters and the peril of the storm.

"Land ho!" and on the horizon was a speck of land, which grew larger and more beautiful. It was one of those tropical islands so green and fair that it makes you say, "This is paradise, and I won't go back to that hell of a civilized world where I came from; here is an island for angels, by Joe." So, ho, for the good-luck funeral on this Eden of the Southern sea, and the carpenter put his brother in the big magnificent coffin and the skipper got out his Bible and ten-page prayer.

The skipper was so enthusiastic by this time about the good-luck funeral and the fine prayer he had made up that he gave the order to launch, not one

of the ship's boats, but the captain's gig. The gig was more dignified and solemn. They lowered the coffin into the gig, the skipper and five men, one of them the ship's carpenter, got in, and they pulled for shore. It was a fine day, and the oars flashed in the water. With the big, high coffin in the bow and the skipper with his Bible and prayer astern, it was a solemn sight. There was a coral reef offshore, and they had to steer around a neck of land to a passage through the reef some distance beyond.

They were a mile offshore when a swell of the sea caught them broadside. Ordinarily, nothing would have happened, but the big heavy coffin made the gig top-heavy. She lurched and capsized. The skipper and the sailors went head over heels into the water. One of the ship's boats would have floated, but the gig, designed for sailing, had a heavy lead keel, and she sank instantly. The coffin was left floating like a small Noah's ark. The skipper and the sailors caught hold of the sides. The skipper's Bible and prayer went floating away. They were out of sight of the ship, which was on the other side of the neck of land.

Sailors are always afraid of sharks, and the skipper and his five men had an idea that there were plenty

of sharks in those waters. They started climbing on top of the coffin. The skipper got up first, and he could have sat all right on the coffin lid, but the others clambered on after him, and the coffin was top-heavy and turned over, and they were in the water again. They were seeing visions of sharks, and once more they began to climb aboard the coffin. As before, the skipper got on top first. He was first all the time.

"Stay down there," he hollered to the others. "Stay down there, by Joe, you sons-o'-guns, by Joe. I have to be up here. I have to think. Didn't you see I lost the Bible and the prayer? I have to think about another prayer. Can we have a funeral without a prayer? I have to be up here and think and make up a prayer."

But the others were thinking of sharks and climbing up on the coffin. The coffin turned over, and splash they went into the water. The captain was bellowing at them, telling them that he should be on top, telling them about the prayer, which made it necessary for him to ride on top of the coffin. He wanted them to hold onto the side and swim, they should hold on with one hand and swim with the other and kick with their legs and push the coffin along to shore, while he was on top of the coffin and making up that prayer.

"Pull, sailor, pull for the shore," as we used to sing. But they were thinking of sharks, by Joe, and they kept climbing up and the coffin kept turning over.

That was no way of navigating, by Joe. And certainly no way to navigate a coffin. Then the skipper had another idea.

"Break out the dead man," he roared. "By Joe, I say, break out the dead man."

As they hung on alongside they unscrewed the top of the coffin, took it off, tipped the coffin, and threw the corpse out into the water. And the carpenter's poor brother was floating on the sea.

"Oh, oh," groaned the carpenter, "poor Jack. Is this a funeral?"

The empty coffin with the lid off was now like a boat, and they managed to get into it. It was no ocean liner, but it was a good enough boat to hold them. The carpenter had hold of his dead brother by his necktie, and kept fast to him with the necktie as a line. The skipper was glaring at him and cursing, but the carpenter said:

"We must give poor Jack a Christian burial, we must, by Joe."

They paddled for shore, using their hands as oars. "Pull, sailor, pull for the shore." They navigated the

coffin toward land. The carpenter kept fast to poor Jack's necktie, and they towed the dead man along behind. The skipper was cursing the carpenter. It was a hard voyage, with that kind of coffin seamanship, but finally they got through the break in the coral reef and into the lagoon and then to shore. Tall Polynesians on the beach were watching this strange coffin navigation of the white men.

The good-luck funeral was not as solemn and Christian as the skipper had visioned it. He had lost his Bible and his prayer, and those sons-o'-guns of sailors, by Joe, had not allowed him the chance of making up a new prayer on top of the coffin. They buried poor Jack beneath green palms near the blue lagoon, while the tall Polynesians looked on. The carpenter offered up a short prayer as best he could, because the skipper wasn't doing any praying that day. He was still glowering and swearing—"By Joe, oh, you sons-o'-guns, by Joe"—and generally ruining the ceremony and solemnity that should have dignified the good-luck funeral.

They took a Polynesian canoe back to the ship. All sails set, and the windjammer continued its voyage. The old sailmaker, Charley Martin, used to spit tobacco juice and swear excessively as he ended

the story by relating that they ran into a storm the next day and had foul weather all the way to Australia. The skipper never stopped cursing the unfortunate carpenter, who deserted the ship at the first port.

VII

GIRL STOWAWAYS AND SKIPPERS' WIVES, AND THE GIRL IN THE CHAIN LOCKER

THE old-time sailor was a rough man. You would think he was all leather and salt and maybe flint. Yet he had much in his heart, a soul full of tenderness. He was always thinking about women. There were many beautiful romances, by Joe. It is a good saying —a sailor has a sweetheart in every port. There were plenty of sweethearts in the ports, and maybe they weren't fine ladies and maybe they were always picking a sailor's pocket, but the sailor was an idealist, and he never ceased to love the sweethearts in the ports. And then there were girl stowaways. I can tell you plenty about them. I would not say that the romances of the sea were always respectable, but sometimes they were. Sometimes there was marriage and the wedding bells. Marriage can make you more trouble, by Joe, than any other kind of romance, but it is always respectable. And a sailor has a great

feeling for respectability. No matter what sins and crimes he may have committed he always knows what is respectable and what is not.

There was a skipper who got married, and married in a very romantic way, but it caused him plenty of trouble. He had had many sweethearts in many ports, but once he fell in love with a nice girl and she fell in love with him. And when that happens you can ring the bells, because everything is fine, for a little while, anyway. The girl was the daughter of a rich Dutch planter out in Java. The skipper was master of a dirty old windjammer. Her parents said *nein*, nix, no. They wanted their daughter to marry somebody with more wealth and social station than the skipper of that old rat hole of a three-masted tub. The girl had spirit, though. She was going to marry her skipper, even though there was trouble. The skipper agreed about the marrying part of it, but he wasn't looking for any trouble, because a skipper can always find plenty of trouble without doing any looking. The parents were influential and could raise a terrible row if he simply took her aboard ship and sailed away. They could get him into plenty of hot water. Love can chart a course better than the best pilot, and the skipper and the girl rigged up a scheme.

It was cunning and neat, by Joe. It would enable them to get married without any disturbance. The skipper would be a hero instead of a villain, and the parents, instead of having him put in jail, would give him three cheers, a fine dinner, and maybe some money.

The skipper went to the parents and said:

"Since you will not let me marry your daughter, I would like to give her a present."

"What kind of present, by Joe?"

"I want to give her a boat, a nice little sailboat."

The girl was fond of sailing around the bay, and it seemed all right for the skipper to give her a little sailboat. The parents said all right, and the skipper gave the girl the sailboat, a pretty little craft. She sailed it merrily around the bay. Meanwhile, the skipper was taking aboard cargo for Hamburg.

One afternoon she sailed out and did not come back. There was much alarm and a search. The skipper joined the alarm and search, and seemed to be heartbroken. The parents gave him hell, by Joe. They said, "You gave her that boat, and now she is lost." Everybody thought the boat had capsized and the girl had drowned.

Two days later the grieving skipper weighed an-

chor and put out of port. A few hours later they were sailing along, and the skipper was scanning the sea.

"By Joe, mate, what is that?" he asked his first officer.

"It's a boat, Captain," replied the mate, looking through his glass.

And it was a boat with a figure in it, waving. They steered toward it.

"By Joe, it's a girl," cried the skipper, and a little later he shouted, "By Joe, it's my girl!"

They were near the boat and the girl when they saw the little craft was sinking. By Joe, how that skipper threw off his coat and went overboard, like a hero. The little boat now was swamped and the girl was in the water. The skipper caught hold of her and swam to the ship with her, and they were hauled aboard.

"By Joe, Skipper, that was lucky," said the mate, shaking the skipper's hand. "If we hadn't happened to sail on this tack she would have drowned. And you saved her. By Joe, it was lucky, and it is romantic."

The girl told a brave story of how she had ventured to sail out too far, and she had lost control of the boat, and the wind had drifted her around as she tried to sail back. She told in a thrilling way of how

the boat had sprung a leak and she had baled it out as long as she could, and had given up hope when her brave skipper had saved her. The truth was that she had deliberately sailed away in accordance with the plan she and the skipper had made. She had hidden herself down the coast until the day the skipper had told her he would sail. Then she had steered her little craft to a point off the shore where the skipper said he would pick her up. She had knocked a hole in the bottom of the boat with a chisel so that the boat would sink and she would be in the water and the skipper could make a hero of himself by jumping in and saving her.

"By Joe, Captain," said the mate, "her parents will thank you for what you have done, especially going overside yourself and saving her."

"Maybe," replied the skipper. That was just what he had figured on.

And now there was heavy debating, with the skipper pretending he didn't know what to do, although he had it all planned out.

"By Joe, Mate, what shall I do? Shall we put back to port and deliver her to her parents?"

"Well, I don't know," said the mate.

"By Joe," said the skipper, as if he were making a

hard decision. "If we delay our voyage we will get hell from the owners. How can we put back to port?"

"Well, I don't know," said the mate.

After the skipper had talked a lot about it the ship kept on its course.

Later on the skipper said:

"By Joe, Mate, what can I do? It is terrible with the girl on the ship. It will be a disgrace to her and her parents. Don't you think so, Mate?"

"Well, I don't know," said the mate.

"By Joe, Mate, I think the only thing to do is to marry her. It will be terrible for her, aboard an old windjammer, like a stowaway, from Java to Hamburg. There will be no disgrace if I marry her. What do you think, Mate?"

"Well, I don't know," said the mate.

The ship put in at Lisbon, and there the skipper married the girl, and she wrote to her parents giving them a very romantic account, her version of what had occurred. The skipper's next voyage was back to Java, and there the bridal couple were received with honors. Everybody said here was a true romance of the sea, the girl saved by her hero skipper and then married to him. That is the way it should be. That is the way things happened in books. The par-

ents, too, thought it was a beautiful thing. Their hearts were touched by the skipper's brave conduct, and they agreed that after the daughter had sailed with him on shipboard all the way from Java to Lisbon it would have been a disgrace to her and to them if he had not married her. They gave the couple their blessings and a marriage feast, and settled money on the girl.

The main trouble with marriage is that there are always fights and arguments. It is like war, only plenipotentiaries of governments can make peace easier than husbands and wives. The skipper and his bride loved each other truly, but pretty soon they began to have an occasional row. It was some time after they had returned to Java and she was making a voyage on his ship, when they had a big fight. You know how women are when they get excited. They say too many things, and they say them too loud. The skipper was telling his wife to shut up, and he may have been talking about a rope's end, for all I know, and she was giving it to him plenty.

"You brute," she was screaming, "I have done so much for you, and you talk to me like that. There I went out to sea in that little boat, and I stayed out for three days, and then I swamped the boat and was

in the water, and, by Joe, you tell me to shut up. By Joe, I won't shut up."

Some of the sailors heard it, and they told the other sailors, and they were all laughing. Back in port they told the story there; it spread around and came to be well known. It got to the ears of the parents. By Joe, they were mad, and they started to make trouble. They complained about the skipper to the German authorities and started out to get him put in jail for stealing the girl. They used their big influence to push the case, and it looked as if it might go hard with the skipper. But the German authorities had sense. They said, "The girl was willing, so what can we do? If a girl is willing, the only thing to do is to put her in irons and keep her there." You will find a lot of sense in that.

The skipper and his wife stuck together. They were always having arguments, but they loved each other. Sometimes when you love each other the most, you have the most arguments. The parents finally have to forgive them.

There was another wedding—it almost happened—and I guess the girl married the sewing machine. I was on a sailing ship out in Samoa, where we lay in harbor for a few weeks. One of my shipmates, a

Bavarian, had a Samoan sweetheart. You know how it is in the South Seas—wonderful. The weather, with the trade winds—wonderful for sailing. On shore it is always fair weather for sentimental affairs. The sailor loved the Samoan girl very much, and there were two things she wanted, and she was always teasing him. One was a sewing machine. She thought of the many fine things she could make with that miraculous invention of the white man's, the sewing machine. The other thing was that she wanted the sailor to marry her. But a sewing machine cost a lot of money, and the sailor did not want to get married. The Samoan girl, however, kept after him so much that he said at last, "All right, we'll get married." She told her people this, and they made great preparations.

In Samoa a marriage is a more magnificent thing than it is with us. It is the same in reality, but it looks better. When you get married you don't run fast to a minister and then in a few minutes you are lashed to the mast. In Samoa it takes days, weeks. First that sailor had to join the tribe, and in those tribes they are tattooed like gargoyles. The sailor had to be tattooed. That was fine. A sailor loved to have all kinds of things tattooed on his body, and

you don't know what it is to be tattooed until the Samoans get through with you. After that the bridegroom had to receive presents from his bride's parents, from the king of the tribe. That was all right, too. A sailor likes to receive presents. Finally the wedding day came, and the tribe was waiting for the bride and bridegroom to arrive. Everything was wreathed with flowers. Everybody had on the gayest flowers and beads. The king had ordered five pigs to be killed for the wedding feast, and plenty of pork was roasting on open fires. The bride arrived, dressed magnificently. She was covered from head to foot with bright colors and flowers. All that was needed was the bridegroom. They were waiting for that son-of-a-gun of a sailor.

They waited and waited, everybody anxious, the bride very anxious. Then *clackety-clack* up the road, a wagon coming fast.

"There he is, my husband," the bride cried joyfully.

"There he is," grunted the Samoans.

The wagon drew up in front of the festivity, but no bridegroom. In it was a sewing machine. That son-of-a-gun of a sailor at the last moment backed out of marrying the Samoan girl. He sent her a sewing

machine and his regrets. Then he sailed away from that island.

The subject of wives is an important one. No other subject needs so much study, but the only way to make the study is through experience. People tell you how terrible wives are, but it makes no impression. But if you have experience with a wife, that makes an impression. The only way to understand what a shipwreck really is, is to have been in a shipwreck. The only way to understand what marriage really is, is to have been married. The picture I had of marriage during my early days at sea was something awful, because a skipper sometimes brings his wife along on a voyage. And in the old days of sail skippers' wives were something fierce. Sloppy ship, sloppy crew, sloppy skipper, all because of a sloppy skipper's wife. You should see Mrs. Skipper as she comes along deck under full sail, and see the sailors make way. Her face is like a hatchet. Her voice is like an ax. Her temper is like a sixteen-inch shell exploding on a deck. The only good thing is when she bawls the skipper out, and that is what she is always doing. It is good to hear a skipper bawled out. But the trouble is she is always bawling the sailors out, too. "By Joe, you son-of-a-gun, you are loafing,

do some work, go and swab the deck," or "You son-of-a-gun, I don't like your face." She is always putting her nose into nautical matters, and favors one sailor and has a grudge against the other, and she influences the skipper, who lets the first son-of-a-gun loaf and makes the second do all the work, by Joe. Some companies are wise. They don't let the skipper bring their wives along.

On the ships in the old days you sometimes had skippers' wives, but once in a while there was something much better—girl stowaways. The sailors would make good friends with a girl ashore and persuade her to come aboard and stow away. They would hide her below and feed her as long as she stayed there. Once in Seattle several seamen got a wonderful girl out of a burlesque show. She had fine curves and wore silk. It was a good idea to have such a girl aboard ship. We all looked at her plenty and thought how lucky we were. We stowed her down in the hold with the cargo, on bales of goods where it was soft, and gave her plenty of coats to keep warm. We made the old sea cook give her the best food out of the skipper's galley and stole some of the skipper's brandy for her. She deserved everything of the best, because sailors don't often have aboard ship a girl

out of the burlesque show. That girl got cold feet. The ship was just putting out of harbor when she got cold feet and came on deck and said she wanted to go back ashore. And they put her ashore. By Joe, we were sorry. We knew it would be a long time before we had a fellow voyager like that again.

Once we stowed away a girl, and she stayed hidden all right until we were a hundred miles at sea. Then she got tired of living like a rat in the black hold and came on deck. The sailors cursed among themselves when they saw her.

"By Joe," said the skipper, "what's this? We got a woman aboard."

"Captain," said one of the men who had brought her aboard, "she must be a stowaway. I can't understand, but she must be a stowaway."

"By Joe," said the skipper, "what can we do now? A woman aboard is something to think about. What can we do with her? She must be treated well. A lady must always be treated well. A gentleman knows how to behave toward a lady. We must give her good quarters, the best on the ship. She must have the best quarters."

The best quarters on a ship are the captain's cabin.

So the skipper took her in his cabin and kept her there for the rest of the voyage.

The story got around, and the skipper's wife heard it. Then there was trouble. The skipper's wife gave the skipper hell and said she would see that nothing like that happened again. And she did. She went with the skipper on his voyages thereafter, and there was always hell aboard. That poor skipper did not live long. After several voyages with his wife aboard he died.

That sad story illustrates the great trouble with girl stowaways. It was hard to make a girl stay down there in the black corner of the hold for three or four months. She would come on deck, and the skipper would see her, and he would have to do what he considered the gentlemanly thing and take her to his cabin.

I know one terrible story of a girl stowaway. The sailors took her aboard, and when the ship had weighed anchor they hid her in the chain locker, the little room where the anchor chain, fathoms on fathoms of it, is piled maybe six feet high, ready to pay out when the anchor is dropped. They put the girl on top of the piled-up anchor chain. The ship steered along the coast, and then a sudden squall blew up and was drifting the ship ashore.

"Heave the anchor," shouted the skipper.

The men on deck knew nothing about the girl in the chain locker, and they heaved the anchor. The heavy anchor plunged and caught bottom, while the wind drifted the ship. The huge anchor chain payed out with a wild clatter until it brought the ship to a stop. The girl in the chain locker, caught in the convulsion of steel, the mad surge of massive iron links, was torn to pieces.

VIII

DRIFTING ACROSS THE PACIFIC WITH DEAD MEN'S BONES FOR A CREW

THERE is one place in the world that always interests sailors, although not many of them ever see it. It's in London. I mean Lloyd's, where they write insurance on ships. Several times I've gone there on visits and watched, thinking of wrecks, mishaps, and disasters at sea. It is a big room shaped like an L, and is crowded. And, by Joe, it's a place of worship, and the god they worship is the god of chance. At one end are the high priests, the underwriters ready to make out insurance. Lloyd's is not a company but an association of underwriters, as your New York Stock Exchange is an association. At the other end are speculators, gamblers who make a business of betting on the loss or safe arrival of ships. To them the sweep of the storm and all the peril of the sea is like a game of poker. Then, maybe, the dramatic thing comes. It is spectacular. The British know how to do things in the fine style of old.

A white-headed old man wearing a scarlet gown, who appears to be the skipper, is climbing the stairs of a kind of pulpit which rises high in a corner of the L-shaped room. Above this pulpit hangs a graven ship's bell. It is the right thing in the right place, significant, symbolical. It is the bell of the *Lutine*, which went down in Dutch waters with a great treasure aboard. Attempts were made to salvage her and pull up the sunken wealth. No use. All they got was the ship's bell of the *Lutine*, and now it hangs at Lloyd's. And there's a dramatic meaning to that bell as it hangs above that high pulpit in that English temple to the god of chance.

The old man in the scarlet gown takes his place in the pulpit. And now the bell begins to toll. The place is usually full of talk and noise, but when the bell tolls everything is dead silence. When the bell has stopped the old man's voice begins, high-pitched, like a kind of priest's chant. He sings out the name of a ship, her skipper, her owners, her port of departure and destination. The brokers recognize this craft as one that has long been missing. Now they will hear about her. Has she finally been found? What has happened to her? Or has she been given up for lost?

The old man goes no further with his chant. He

stops. An instant of silence. Then the bell starts tolling again. The ship has been given up for lost. And that is how a requiem, an underwriting requiem, is sung over a ship that has gone down with all hands and never a word or sign.

Shipwrecks have a natural fascination for the sailor. To be lost at sea is the ever-present fate before his eyes. And it is not merely the peril of death, but also of untold horrors. In the fo'c'sle there were endless stories of disaster at sea. The man who had been in a shipwreck made the telling of the tale of his adventure a regular part of his life, and the old Jack Tar who had been in several wrecks always went to the head of the story-telling class.

The ultimate classic was always the case of men adrift in open boats without food or water, and with hunger and thirst so terrible that they ate each other. One yarn told of a sailing ship that foundered on the open sea, and the men took to the boats and drifted for weeks. Finally food and water were gone, and the idea came up—that idea always comes up in such circumstances—of one man being sacrificed and killed and eaten to save the lives of the rest, and of drawing lots to see who the victim should be. They talked about it. The thing is seldom done, but

often talked about. But in this case the men were finally driven by hunger and thirst to cannibalism. They drew lots, and, by Joe, the cabin boy drew the evil number. And now they didn't know what to do. They said—if we kill and eat the boy and then are saved they will think that we did it because he was a mere boy and not because he drew the unlucky number. Better that we should draw again, they thought, so that someone else will be picked. They drew lots again, and again the evil luck fell on the cabin boy. The god of chance had picked him. "There is nothing else to do," they said. "Twice he has been marked, and it is clear he is to be the one." And so they killed the boy and ate him. The story came out afterward, but they could not be punished for what they had done. I believe there is no law at sea to punish a deed like that.

There is another story that is heartbreaking, as heartbreaking as any I ever heard a sailor tell. It was about an Arab schooner, manned by Arabs, and she was running before the wind on the Arabian Sea. Aboard her were the Arab skipper's three sons, the oldest fifteen, and his nephew, a young boy, too. All people love their sons, and the Arabs more than most. That skipper thought his three sons were as precious

as all the houris of his Arab paradise, and he loved his nephew, too. Then the wind came howling, and a terrible storm of those Eastern waters was beating down on the sea and raising the waves until they were mountain high. It was an awful blow, by Joe.

They were calling on Allah, because the schooner was sinking. Her seams were open, and she was foundering by the bow. The men and the four boys took to the boats in the raging sea. There were two boats. Six men were in one, and in the other were the skipper, three sailors, and the four boys.

They were calling on Allah the louder, because the boats were being swamped by the tremendous waves. Each boat had one of the ship's water tanks, eight feet long, four feet wide, and five feet deep. And now, with the boats awash, they had to take to the water tanks. They left a little water in them to drink, and launched them into the boiling sea. The six men of the one boat got aboard their tank, drifted away, and were never seen again. The captain put the four boys in his tank, and the four men rode the top. And they drifted along on the storm-swept sea. Oh, they had reason to call on Allah.

They had only two pounds of biscuit for food and the little water left at the bottom of the tank to drink,

and it was sure to be days before they were picked up—if ever.

"I don't want food or water," said that Arab skipper, and he refused to touch the biscuit or the water. He took his share and gave it to his three sons and his nephew.

A day and a night passed, and the storm still raged. The water in the bottom of the tank was slowly being ruined by sea water that washed in. The skipper's youngest son died.

And the skipper cried out to Allah and said: "With God's help I will not give my dead son to the sharks, but will keep him to give him the burial on shore a Moslem should have—if we ever see any shore again." And he kept his son's body in the tank and gave his share of biscuit and water to his remaining two sons and his nephew. And the three boys stayed there in the tank and slept there beside the dead boy.

Then the sharks came around, huge sharks. It was in the Arabian Sea and the sharks out there are the worst sharks of all. They knew there was death in the tank. They must have smelled it. They rushed at the tank, and the men on top struck at them with their

knives. The next day the skipper's son, the next to the oldest, died.

And that old skipper once more cried out to Allah and would not throw his dead son to the sharks, but determined to keep him for a decent Moslem burial on shore. He placed the dead boy beside the other dead boy and beside the two live boys. Less than ever would he eat or drink, giving his share to the two boys. And the sharks swarming around the tank grew more furious. They smelled more death. And, by Joe, they dashed against the tank, as if they would turn it over. And the men on top kept striking and striking at them with their knives. Soon afterward the skipper's nephew died. That was an unlucky outfit if there ever was one.

"Allah, Allah," wept the skipper, and placed the dead boy beside the two other dead boys and beside the live boy. And he gave his share of food and drink to his oldest son, who was left. And the sharks, with the smell of death enraging them, hurled themselves against the tank with all their strength, and the men on top had all they could do to fight them and keep them from capsizing it.

And so they drifted day after day, a week and on

into another week. The storm had calmed and the fire of the tropical sun beat down. The water that was left was merely the sea water that washed in. Two men were on top of the tank and two were inside with the skipper's oldest son, and the three dead boys were in the tank with them. And day and night the men on top fought with the sharks that hurled themselves against the tank. On the ninth day the skipper cried out to Allah, his God, and said they must throw the bodies of his two sons and his nephew overboard to the sharks. They dropped them into the sea, and in the clear water watched the sharks come darting with a mangling and a tearing.

On the thirteenth day the skipper and the three sailors and the skipper's oldest son were growing mad with thirst, but it was on the thirteenth day that the steamer *Pilsna*, out of Bombay, sighted what looked like a buoy with men clinging to it. She steered toward it and picked up the four men and the skipper's oldest son. The skipper stayed at his son's bedside, and the next day the boy died. Surely that Arab skipper had more reason than comes to most men to cry out to Allah.

The shipwrecked sailor clinging to a spar in a stormy sea is the thing that you would surely find

among the pictures illustrating an old-time sea story. And when ships go down men do find themselves in the water holding onto heaven knows what and heaven knows for how long. Maybe some day they will have a contest, the prize to go to the best story about a shipwrecked sailor clinging to a spar. I know the story that should win the prize. Go out and inquire among old sailors and see if you can find one to beat it.

The schooner *Juanita* out of Saint Pierre, Miquelon, with a crew of twenty-six men, was one of those French-Canadian fishing craft that take their catches on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. French Canadians are hardy people, and the French-Canadian fisherman is as tough a sailor as was ever turned into leather by the salt of the sea. The *Juanita* was out on her last cruise for the year after a season when the catches were many and big, with fish enough to burst the nets. That means a lot to those French fisher folk on the bleak island of Miquelon. You don't know what the word "bleak" means until you visit either the North Atlantic or go down toward Cape Horn. By Joe, it's what you call "glum." Aye. Well, the *Juanita* was working away on the Grand Banks when the barometer began to fall, and

the clouds were pressing gray upon the sea. The captain anchored with a full length of cable, and everything was snugged down tight for the blow. It promised to be a hard blow, but nobody knew it was a West Indian hurricane, one of the worst in years, that had come up the coast. The wind came up like a blast out of hell, and huge seas arose as if some devil had given them a sudden terrible command. The *Juanita* rode at the end of her long cable, while the wind screeched and the waves came up thundering. She plunged and reared like a ship gone mad.

She could scarcely live at the end of her line, but the hurricane had burst so suddenly that there was nothing else to do. It would have been instant suicide to cut the cable and try to run before the storm. Had the *Juanita* come broadside to the seas she would have been instantly overwhelmed. The men aboard could only hope that their anchor lines and the timbers of their craft would hold.

The *Juanita* would rise to the summit of a high wave until her forward end was half out of water. Then she would plunge dizzily into the trough of the sea. Instantly she would be raised to another towering crest. She was plunging down in one of her wildest descents when a swiftly following sea

struck her. It split her open, and she sank instantly.

The catastrophe was so sudden and complete that the men on her scarcely knew what had happened before they were plunged into the furious sea. They beat the water futilely and drowned—all save one, the captain. He was a curly Canuck, as strong a man as you will find even up there where they breed only strong men. He swam with powerful, despairing strokes. Then a plank drifted by, and he caught it. He clung to the plank, swinging high and sinking low among the towering waves. Once he saw a white face, a shipmate. He was beyond the captain's reach, and the captain saw him go down, drowning. And now the skipper was alone—so far as any of his comrades were concerned, his human comrades. As he was swept along, half-smothered by the seas, he saw two dim objects near him. At first he thought they were two of his crew, and he shouted encouragement. The objects approached nearer, and he saw heads and snouts. They were two dogs, big mastiffs, that had been pets aboard the *Juanita*. They were wild with fear, and they seemed to know that the plank to which the captain was clinging offered them support. They swam to it. A man might cling to a spar, but

the dogs must climb onto it. The two mastiffs tried with desperate struggles to climb onto the plank. They pushed it under water, turned it over, threatening to tear it from the captain's grasp. And now it was man against dogs in the raging sea.

The skipper tried to drive them away. He inched toward them and struck at them with blows of his fist. They snarled and turned on him, and there in the blackness of the hurricane and the fury of the sea it was a fight to death, man against two dogs. By Joe, what a fight it must have been.

They were powerful brutes, with the splendid, savage jaws of their mastiff kind. They were swimming at the skipper, biting at him. One made a slashing lunge at his master's arm. He had one hand free for the fight. With the other he must hold onto the plank. He evaded the dog's teeth, and with a swift movement grasped the brute by the throat. That skipper had a hand of iron, and, clutching with the grip of despair, thrust the animal's head below the water. The dog struggled madly and carried the skipper below the water. And still the skipper held fast, one hand to the plank, the other to the brute's throat. He kicked his way to the surface and still kept the dog below. The brute's struggles ceased.

The skipper relaxed his hand, and the dog's body sank. The other dog was behind him. It sank his fangs into the skipper's neck.

That was something, by Joe. The skipper knew that this was the moment when it was do or die—probably die. He made an effort, such as a man can make maybe once in his life. He reached that iron hand back and grabbed the dog by the neck. The dog kept on biting, but the skipper brought him down and forced him under water. The dog lashed and pulled the skipper down, and for a long minute the skipper was under water most of the time. But the dog was under water all the time. The brute straightened out limp, and the skipper let go his convulsive hand. The dog sank. The skipper was still holding onto the plank. He had two hands of iron.

He had won the fight, surely one of the strangest fights in the long strange story of the sea. All he had to do now was wait till he was picked up, and that could not be till the hurricane was over, and most likely it would be never. The struggle with the dogs had weakened him, and he was parched with thirst and numbed with cold. The hours passed, a day passed. Thirty-six hours passed. The skipper was scarcely conscious. He had one mere instinct, and

that was to cling to the plank. His hands seemed to have become a part of the plank.

The French-Canadian fishing boat *General Archamare* put out of Saint Pierre to the Banks when the hurricane had subsided. "Man in the water," the lookout shouted, and the boat steered to the skipper still hanging onto the plank. The fishermen at the rail shouted to him, but he did not move. He was too far gone. They reached down with a boathook, caught his clothes, and drew him aboard. At first they thought he was dead. He did not open his eyes for an hour. Then he began to rave. He struck wildly at his rescuers, old friends from Saint Pierre. He thought he was still fighting with the dogs. His mind had snapped. They held him down and poured brandy down his throat. But he still fought them, taking them for the dogs.

It was days before the skipper's experience became known, before he could tell it. Then his delirium quieted down, and, between attacks of frenzy he told the story. He would tell a little rationally enough and then would begin to fight the dogs again. As weeks went by his mind became clearer and steadier, but I do not know whether he ever fully recovered his sanity and stopped falling into those

terrible delusions, when he was fighting the dogs again.

Several years ago a story came from the Pacific, a news story, and I got a pair of shears and cut out the clipping and saved it. The other day I found it, all water-soaked, with some other papers and souvenirs. I saved it because it made one of the most tragic sea stories I know of. It told of a Japanese fishing smack, with a crew of twelve men, which was out on a cruise when her engine broke down and could not be repaired and she was left adrift. The wind blew her east, out toward the middle of the Pacific. They tried to sail her, but it was no go. She drifted for five months, clear across the Pacific. Her crew died of thirst and starvation, one by one. Aboard was a sailor, Sutejiro Izawa, who kept a diary, and when he died the diary was taken up by Gennosuke Matsumoto and was kept by him until he died, and he seems to have been the last of the twelve to die. Excerpts of the diary were published. I cut them out of a paper, the *Post-Intelligencer* of Seattle, I believe it was, and put them between the pages of my ship's Bible. They make one of the most extraordinary documents of the sea that I have ever seen.

The diary tells how the engine broke down, and

the men were unable to repair it. They tried to sail to shore, but were unable to make headway against the wind. At sea for fifteen days and adrift for eight, and then comes the grim part of the tragic log.

"December 20. When the westerly winds were blowing day after day the captain began to talk of taking big chances and heading for America. May we not be called upon to suffer too much hardship, especially the men with wives and children. I believe the home folks are worrying very much. It may be everything might have been so fated. Words of the ancients say the sins of the fathers are rested upon the sons.

"December 24. From morning to evening we spent all our time praying.

"December 26. Unable to head west, we have at last turned toward the east. We have finally decided to risk all and head for America.

"December 28. Even our deepest prayers do not draw pity from our angry god. O Kompira [Japanese sailors' god], have pity on us or we shall throw away thy charms. No, no, no. Let us not think of such heresy. Please pity us and forgive us. For thirteen hours more we have drifted.

"January 1. New Year Day, the Sixteenth Year of Taisho. We celebrated this day by mixing rice and red beans and enjoying the luxury of *kayo jofu* [dried bean cake].

"January 4. Praise be to Kompira. He has sent us rain; we gathered it in canvases and shall hoard it as a miser hoards his gold.

"January 27. A ship! A ship! Happy madness seizes us as we sight a steamer. We build a fire, we wave, we shout, we dance. But O Kompira! The stranger does not see us and is gone. Alas, again we are drifting, we know not whither. O Kompira, are you without mercy?

"February 13. Sickness is upon us. Hatuzo Terada has lain in his bunk these past five days and is wasting away.

"March 5. To-day at breakfast time we had no food.

"March 9. Denjiro Hosai this day died of illness. [He was the first of the ill-fated crew to perish.]

"March 17. There being no wind, we repaired the sails. Sutejiro Izawa [the chronicler] died. [On this date Masumoto began keeping the diary.]

"April 19. Yoshishiro Udehira, who was ill, died in the forenoon. [He was the tenth of the crew to die, leaving only the captain and Matsumoto.]

"April 29. Praise Kompira. It has rained. We have water again.

"May 5. Being ill, I could no longer stand at the wheel.

"May 6. Captain Tokizo Miki became very ill.

"May 8. Ship adrift. Only two of us and both so ill. The ship is now running with no one at the wheel.

"May 11. Cloudy. Waves high. Ship adrift with rolled up sails. I am suffering of the captain's illness."

This is the last entry in the log written by Matsumoto. His body with that of the captain, and the whitening bones of the others, was found in the cabin of the ship when it drifted up on the American coast near the entrance to Puget Sound.

IX

THE NIGGER GOT RELIGION AND THEY WERE GOING TO THROW HIM OVERBOARD

I ONCE knew of a praying nigger, by Joe, who nearly prayed himself into a watery grave. The four-masted schooner *Horatio Foss* was bound from Philadelphia with a cargo of coal for Martinique. Aboard was a big black man whose name was Joseph Notice but whom everyone called Bill. He had the feeling of religion. He was a pious man. When he came aboard he said to the skipper:

"Here's two things ah needs, and ah always has to have 'em—a bottle of rum and a Bible."

The bottle of rum was easy, and Bill got that. But there was no Bible aboard the *Horatio Foss*. Bill kept asking for that Bible. By Joe, he had to have it. They rummaged around and at last dug up an old Church of England prayer book. Bill had never seen anything like that. He looked at it. "Boy," said he, "this heah suah am like de Holy Book." He began to read it. There were plenty of pious things in it, by

Joe. "Boy," said he, "yes, suh, this heah book suah do look like de Bible." Anyway, he couldn't get anything else.

The *Horatio Foss* weighed anchor and set sail for Martinique. The skipper walked the bridge, the sailors worked on deck, and Bill drank his bottle of rum and read that Church of England prayer book. He used to read out of it to the other sailors whenever any of them were within hearing. I saw a Church of England prayer book myself once on an old sailing ship, and once I was to Church of England services, and I can remember those words—"The Lord is in His holy temple." So, on that dirty old windjammer coal barge the *Horatio Foss* almost any time you could hear Bill's voice droning out, "De Lawd am in His holy temple."

The *Horatio Foss* needed all the prayers Bill could think of. She ran for two days before strong winds and was in the Gulf Stream when the weather began to get dirty. A heavy gale set in with high seas, and the ship had to run before it. Day after day the storm blew with an obstinate violence, and the *Horatio Foss* was leaking. Each day of shrieking wind, raging sea, and leaking ship Bill read more and louder out of that Church of England prayer book. "De Lawd am

in His holy temple. . . . Lawd, have mercy on us."

The tempest lasted for seven days and then moderated a bit, but the *Horatio Foss* was now beyond the blessing of even the best weather. The wrenching of wind and wave had opened her seams. The men were at the pumps all day and all night. They pumped, by Joe, till their backs broke, till their arms went dead of weariness. They fought as best they could against the water in the hold, but inch by inch the water gained on them. "De Lawd am in His holy temple . . ." and Bill chanted out of the prayer book all the time he was not at the pumps, "O Lawd who stillest de raging sea, can't you heah dis sinner?"

Five days of pumping, while the seas were high and the wind blew hard. Presently there was six feet of water in the hold. Then in one day it gained two feet. Then it had reached 'tween decks. By Joe! That's when you are sinking. And Bill was giving plenty of "De Lawd am in His holy temple," and he was reading prayers all the time. "O Lawd, send word to rebuke the raging winds and de roaring sea."

"Abandon ship," said the skipper.

They took a supply of food and water and launched a boat. In getting her into the water she hit the ship's

side and opened her seams a little. When the nine men of the *Horatio Foss* pushed off from their foundering vessel they found their boat was leaking, and they had to bale. They strained at the oars, pulling away from the foundering ship, and, with the sea so high, they lay with a sea anchor out. An hour after they abandoned ship they saw the *Horatio Foss* go down by the head. They were baling all the time. Bill sat in the bow with his prayer book, and he was singing out, "De Lawd am in His holy temple . . . de Lawd will save us."

They raised what sail they could in the gale and steered for Bermuda four hundred miles away. The skipper was at the compass, watching the course, striving not to lose an inch of headway toward Bermuda. There was endless labor in keeping the boat from being swamped by the waves. The crew baled in shifts, two men with gasoline cans always pouring water over the sides. The racking labor, the endless beating, and the menace of the angry sea, the awful solitude of sea and storm, by Joe, that is something awful. It is no wonder that men go crazy when they are abandoned on the sea. And Bill was getting a funny sound in his voice as time after time he sang out, "De Lawd am in His holy temple," and he was

getting things mixed up with ideas of his own as he read out of the prayer book. "O Lawd, at whose command de winds blow and lift up de waves ob de sea. Lawdy, Lawd, make dat wind stop. Lawdy, Lawd, make dat sea go down."

As the days passed they labored or sat idle, sullenly, gloomily. Sometimes the gale slackened, and then, by Joe, it blew hard again. Sometimes the tropical sun beat down on the high-running sea and on the little boat that struggled on its way. Sometimes the rain flooded down and drenched the men. They were anxiously careful of their biscuit and water. The supply began to run low. Hands were bleeding from the constant labor with the baling cans. Bodies, chafed by constant salt water, broke out in sores. Nerves were frayed and minds began to become disordered. The exhausted balers growled when they changed watch. There were savage mutterings when the skipper cut down the ration of biscuit and water. Bill now was going on crazily with an unchanging singsong chant—"De Lawd am in His holy temple." When wind and sea calmed down for a while he yelled with wild thanksgiving: "O Lawd, thou didst send forth Thy commandment, and de windy storm ceased and was turned into a calm. Keep

dat windy storm away, O Lawd, and keep it calm." When it began to blow again Bill droned crazily: "O Lawd, de sea roared and de stormy wind lifted up de waves thereof. Oh, dat stormy wind, Lawd. Oh, see dem waves."

That was awful, by Joe—the constant praying. The shipwrecked men were going out of their minds with despair and the terrible hardships, and always in their ears was that crazy muttering, singing, chanting, droning "De Lawd am in His Holy temple," and every time they heard it, it was like something that comes so often that it drives you mad. They were half mad already, and that nigger's ceaseless praying was making them demented altogether. They said: "By Joe, shut up. Shut up, you black son-of-a-gun, by Joe." Bill only prayed the louder. Pretty soon it was a duet, with Bill's prayers accompanied by the curses of the other men. On the fifth day they got so desperate with his praying that they wanted to throw him overboard. On the sixth day they were determined to throw him overboard, and the skipper had to interfere with a strong hand. But Bill kept on praying. By Joe, he kept on praying.

On the seventh day they had seven biscuits left

and three gallons of water. And they sighted land. The weather was fair, and on the horizon a speck grew larger. They thought it was a mirage, but it wasn't. Land, the Bermudas, oh, by Joe. Bill was howling with plenty of thanksgiving "De Lawd am in His holy temple. O Lawd, thou hast showed us how both winds and seas obey Thy command. Where you all now, wind? Where you all now, sea? Yonder am de land."

But, by Joe, that was when the real devil got hold of them. That was the time for hearts to break and for brains to go crazy. The wind was dead against their course toward land. They got out the oars and rowed. They were within ten miles of shore when they were stopped and could go no farther. The wind against them had increased, and they were in an adverse current. They set their sails to tack, they tried to row, but the boat would not sail cleanly enough, and, weakened by hardships, they had not enough strength in their arms. They could make no progress. Land slowly receded. Night was coming on. By Joe, that was something to ruin your brains—to be saved and feel all the joy of being saved and then to see that you are lost. The men in the boat were out of their heads with despair. Bill was screaming and

howling. "De Lawd am in His holy temple. Holy temple. Lawd. De holy temple is in de Lawd."

"Throw him overboard. By Joe, throw the black son-of-a-gun overboard."

And that was when Bill just barely escaped a watery grave. By Joe, they were just about to heave him overside. "By Joe," the skipper was shouting and interfering. "Mutiny, murder, are you going to commit murder?" He had to fight with the men to keep Bill out of the water. Bill was still praying, but he had piped down and was just muttering.

That afternoon the Holland-American liner *Volendam* stood out of Hamilton and picked her way among reefs and shoals. It was nearly dusk when the shipwrecked men in the boat saw the distant ship on the horizon. They had taken a supply of flares with them when they abandoned ship, and now a red glare spread over the ocean. The big liner sighted it and steered for a rescue. And presently exhausted men were being helped aboard. Bill had his prayer book with him as they hauled him aboard. "De Lawd am in His holy temple," and he was still yodeling his prayers.

X

THE SALT OF THE SEA IN THE LIFE OF AN OLD JACK TAR

My old life at sea left on me an indelible impression. No matter how long I may live, no matter how far back into the past it recedes, it will remain the most vivid part of my memory. Those were the days when I was young and went to sea in the kind of craft that is the most dear to a sailor's heart—the old sailing vessels, by Joe. One peculiarity that I have to-day is the love for going aboard old windjammers and for making friends and swapping yarns with old sailors. Every place I go where I find a veteran of the windjammers, as I often do, he is the one I like to talk with the best. And I meet some wonderful old sailing-ship characters in my travels nowadays, characters that take me back to my days before the mast and I think I am aboard a fine three-master or lazy old schooner again.

Not long ago I met one of the rarest of sea char-

acters, as salty an old Jack Tar as I ever encountered in my life at sea. He is a seaman aboard your marvelous liner *Leviathan*. There on that magnificent ship, with its glowing salon, its palatial ballroom and luxurious suites, old Adolf Colstad still follows the sea after more than sixty years aboard ships. He is employed to sweep up the fo'c'sle and do light work and odd jobs, what amounts almost to a pension for an eighty-year-old seaman. We had a long talk, and I listened to his stories of the old days as if it were my own youth that was talking. His yarn, as he spun it with brief episodes of storm and shipwreck and the other mishaps of the sea, seemed to me like a swift, vivid picture of a sailor's life. I will try to tell it somewhat as he told it to me. Imagine that you are aboard the magnificent *Leviathan*. There are the great smooth decks with fashionable voyagers promenading up and down or playing shuffleboard. And now imagine that we are down in the big comfortable fo'c'sle, and old Adolf Colstad is talking, a stalwart old seaman who looks twenty years younger than his eighty years, with a lean, tranquil face, a clear, steady eye, a fringe of good gray hair.

I was born in California in 1850. My father was a

Norwegian, who had been a drill master in the army in the old country. He went to California in 1832, joined the American army just before the Mexican War, and as a lieutenant fought in the first battle in California. I went to sea when I was thirteen years old, in 1863. I shipped as a cabin boy on the *Sovereign of the Seas*, a full-rigged ship bound from San Francisco to Liverpool. It was a good voyage. Even in rounding the Cape we had no trouble. The food was good, the work was hard. I liked it all on that trip and said the life of a sailor was the life for me. And so a sailor I stayed to this day, more than sixty years later. I have sailed in every latitude from Iceland to Cape Horn on so many voyages that I have lost count of the number, some good, some bad, with storm and shipwreck and mutiny and all the terrible things the devil could brew aboard the old sailing ships.

The *Atlanta*, a small bark of 567 tons, set sail with a cargo of Canadian lumber for Hongkong. She didn't get very far. A storm breezed up, and the *Atlanta* went on the rocks of British Columbia and broke in two. The combers were coming in, driven by the lashing wind, and there was a boiling surf. It looked as if a man would have a slim chance of beating

through it on the long swim to shore. The ship was breaking up fast. We poured barrels of oil into the water, hoping to calm the surf. I had saved five hundred dollars from my wages on previous voyages and had it on me in gold. Five hundred dollars was a lot of money to a sailor in those days. I tied the gold in a silk handkerchief to make sure I wouldn't lose it and tied the handkerchief snugly around my neck. Then a dive into the swirling water and a swim through the surf. I was a powerful swimmer, and if anybody could get to shore I could. I fought my way, now raised on the crest of a wave, now swept down tumbling against the rocky bottom. That silk handkerchief with the gold began to get tight around my neck. The silk was shrinking in the water. It grew tighter and tighter as I struggled in that crazy surf. It seemed as if it were going to strangle me. I couldn't get it off. I had tied it with a good sailor's knot, which now was made more secure by the water, and untying a knot while you were beaten and tossed in the surf was too much for anybody. So there I was, scarcely able to keep from being drowned at the best, with that handkerchief and gold choking me. That was certainly a strange way for things to break. I was nearly dead and things were black before my eyes,

when I finally dragged myself ashore and was able to tear that strangling band from around my neck.

All hands got ashore except the cook, who drowned in the surf. It was a wild coast and all the people we could find were a few Indians and a missionary priest. They took care of us.

At Christmas time in 1895 the full-rigged three-master *Arabia*, bound from New York to San Francisco, was trying to beat her way around Cape Horn. We were sixty-nine days out. The skipper's wife and baby were aboard. The weather was fine, and we expected no trouble. But Cape Horn is treacherous in any weather. A combination of wind and current, and the *Arabia* ran on a reef. We got ashore easily, with plenty of stores and provisions, and found ourselves castaways on a deserted island off the Cape. On the rocky shore we saw human skeletons, reminders of people who in other times had been marooned on that island. It was in the middle of the Southern winter and fairly warm, with good weather. We had taken plenty of stores from the ship and were comfortable. But always there were those skeletons that told of dire possibilities and reminded us that we were on a desert island for heaven knows how long. Our only hope was a ship that would approach close

enough to sight our signals, and that might be soon or a long time. There were many vessels rounding the Cape, but there was no certainty when one would pass near our island. We waited with few physical hardships but with constant fear and anxiety. It was no place for a woman and a child.

The long days dragged by and stretched out into weeks. Then a sail hove in sight. She shaped a course that was the best luck for us and picked us up. The skipper's wife and baby were weak and ill, but quickly got well.

Another time I was on the *Somalia*, bound from Galveston to Hamburg with a cargo of cotton. She flew the Ecuadorian flag, but her skipper was a Dane. She was a twelve-hundred-ton bark, a rotten old boat. She was leaking a little when we left Galveston, bnt we thought it would be all right. We ran into a hurricane in the Gulf, but weathered it all right, except that the *Somalia* was leaking more and more.

When we got to the middle of the Atlantic she was leaking so much that the pumps would not keep the water down any more. The captain said "abandon ship," although there was a long way to go in an open boat. The boats were as old and rotten as the ship. I thought they were worse than staying with the

foundering vessel, and another man thought so, too, a Greek sailor. We remained aboard the *Somalia*, while the others rowed away in the boat, the skipper and eleven men.

The Greek and I aboard the sinking hulk worked the pumps and succeeded in keeping the water down. We fought and held it for two days, and by that time were so worn out that we didn't care if she floated or sank. We lay down to sleep and then were awakened by the way the ship was rolling. She was filling up. We couldn't hope any more. Our strength wouldn't hold up to enable us to fight the water. All we could do was to wait for her to sink. She was sinking by the head when a ship sighted the wreck. She put a boat over and rescued us.

The lifeboat was never heard from. The skipper and the other eleven men were lost.

I was on the twelve-hundred-ton bark *Prussia* when she went on a reef near the Falkland Islands. We took to the boats, expecting to make the Falklands easily, but the wind was against us. The skipper said the only thing to do was to run before the breeze and head for Montevideo. We were sixteen days in getting there, but we had plenty of supplies and it was just a nice cruise. Another pleasant lifeboat ex-

perience was off the coat of Brazil. We had a cargo of paraffin. Fire broke out in that paraffin, and you can bet we launched the boats in a hurry. It was a fine day and we had an easy sail into Pernambuco. I later found out that it was the skipper who had set the fire. He wanted to collect the insurance. He had everything ready for a comfortable trip in the boats and picked a nice day for the fire. He got the insurance, and, so far as I know, was never called to book for his little trick.

The worst storm I ever saw was a typhoon in the China Sea. I was on the *Paul Revere*, a three-masted full-rigged ship from New York to Hongkong with a cargo of paraffin. She is a hulk in Manila now, I think. In the China Sea you can always tell when a typhoon is coming if you are any kind of a weather reader. In those waters you seldom see a really clear night with no clouds around. If you do see one, look out for a typhoon. We had a San Francisco skipper who was not well acquainted with Eastern waters. He hadn't much weather sense, anyway. We had a beautifully clear night.

"Captain," I said, "I think we are in for a typhoon."

He paid no attention to me.

The next morning everything was damp. The rail was wet and clammy. It began to breeze up and got black. And pretty soon hell was raging in the air and on the sea. It was my watch on deck from eight to twelve, midnight. I came on deck and fought my way along through the whistling wind and the seas that broke over the ship. Every step was a struggle. Then I planted myself at one of the stanchions, which fitted into an iron socket. I got both arms around the stanchion and held on. A tremendous sea came over and broke the stanchion right out of its socket. It picked up the skylight and a bunch of life preservers. I got up with the skylight smashed all around me.

For hours there was nothing but the shrieking of the wind and the blackness of the storm. There is something about a typhoon that makes you think of another world. The cabin gets full of water, and the captain comes up like a gopher out of a hole. That typhoon took our three masts right out, and we were a drifting hulk. When it was over we sighted a steamer. She took us in tow into Singapore.

Several weeks later, with new masts, we were through the straits and out into the Pacific. A fresh fair breeze sprang up.

"Set them tops'ls," the skipper bellowed. "Loose the sail."

Then, half an hour later, while we were running under a full spread of canvas: "All hands on deck. Typhoon coming."

We had no chance to take in the sail. The tops'ls were flying in all directions. The storm hit us square. It wasn't so terribly bad, just enough to strip us clean. When it was over we had lost all our canvas. We were a sailing ship without sails. And that's no fun, either. We just lay on the sea waiting for something to come along. Two days later an Italian ship hove in sight. We got some sail from her and got under way.

The worst ship I ever sailed on was the *T. F. Oaks*, bound from China to New York with a cargo of silks, laces, rattan, and camphor. I was second mate on that trip. The skipper was bad. He had his wife aboard, and she was worse, a savage dragon of a sea devil. We had bad weather and storms and were at sea for a hundred and seventy-nine days, six months. The stores got bad. The hardtack was full of worms and there were maggots in everything, and when it wasn't bugs it was mold. The men got scurvy and fever. Two or three of them died and were dropped

overboard. The first mate was down with scurvy, and others were so bad they were about to cash in their checks. There was stuff aboard that would have helped the men, medicines, sago, gruel, and butter, but the skipper's wife kept them locked away. Nobody got any except herself and the skipper.

"I'm not going to take any chance that we go short," she said. "I'm looking out for number one."

I saw one man rotten with scurvy drag himself aft one morning. He said to the skipper's wife:

"Please give me some medicine or something to eat that will help me. I'm dying."

"Get away," she snarled, "go forward and die, you blankety blank."

I never heard any such foul language as that cursed woman spoke to the dying sailor. I walked up and hit her. I couldn't stand it any longer. That was the only time in my life that I hit a woman.

When we finally put into port in New York six of the men were so far gone with scurvy that they had to be carried ashore. The word got out of what had happened aboard. That skipper never got another ship. Later he dropped dead on South Street in New York one day. The *T. F. Oaks* some time afterward went down off San Francisco with a cargo of silk.

What ever happened to that devilish wife of the skipper I don't know.

I was second mate on the *William H. Smith* bound from Australia to San Pedro, California, when we had a mutiny. It was the only real mutiny I ever saw during my long life at sea. The crew was a tough lot and the work was hard and the food none too good. There was special discontent about the coffee, and I must admit it was something awful. There was a lot of grumbling and nasty threats, and you could see that trouble was brewing.

The skipper ordered some of the men to wash down the deck. They shirked and growled and finally refused. The others of the crew gathered around and backed them up. And that was the time when things looked very critical. The skipper walked right up to the mutineers.

"The man," he called, "who thinks he is better than I am, let him step right up."

Nobody stepped up. Nobody wanted to make the open move.

"I'd like to know who started this," the skipper went on. "I'd make him step up, and he'd suffer for it." He turned to one of the men who looked the meanest. "I think it was you."

Scudding along before a South Sea breeze.

ADOLF COLSTADT

"As salty an old Jack Tar as I ever encountered in my life at sea."

"It wasn't me. It was everybody."

"It can't be everybody," replied the skipper. "There is always a ringleader. And I believe it was you."

"No, it wasn't me. It was him." He turned and pointed to a scowling browed Greek.

The Greek began to curse him for being a coward, and they were snarling at each other. In a minute knives were out and they were fighting. There was a general mêlée. The skipper, the first mate, myself, and several others who sided with us, were wading into the fracas, hitting right and left. When it was over three men lay dying on the deck. Those mutineers had cut each other to ribbons. And that was the end of the mutiny.

One voyage I was on the famous old clipper ship, the *Red Cloud*. At San Francisco the first mate, a Nova Scotia man, was supposed to get married, but he didn't get married. His girl disappeared.

"I'll bet she liked another fellow better and ran away with him," we joshed the mate.

He didn't say much, only that he didn't know what had become of her.

We were out at sea when for three nights running a woman appeared on deck. She came close enough

to one man for him to recognize her as the mate's girl. He ran to the mate's cabin.

"Come on deck, Mate," he hollered. "Your girl is aboard."

The mate came on deck, saying the sailor was crazy. Then he saw the woman, his girl. He began to grind his teeth and froth at the mouth. He fell down on deck in a dead faint. When he came to he confessed that he had killed his girl in a jealous quarrel and hid her body and now she had come back to haunt him.

That was in 1879. The *Red Cloud* was bound from San Francisco to New York around Cape Horn. At New York we turned the mate over to the authorities, and he was sent back to San Francisco. I don't know what ever became of him.

My last exciting experience at sea, and it was the end of my career on sailing ships, came in 1917. The old American square-rigger *John H. Kirby* put out of New York bound for Eastern waters around the Cape of Good Hope. It was just before the United States declared war on Germany. We had no wireless aboard and didn't know that the U. S. had gone into the war until we were in the Indian Ocean, and then we found it out plenty. A steamer overhauled us.

She had guns and ordered us to abandon ship. She was the German raider *Wolf*. She informed us that the United States was now at war with Germany and that she was going to sink us. She blew up the *Kirby* and took us prisoner. So there we were aboard a German raider out on a ship-sinking cruise, and heaven only knew what would come next.

The *Wolf* was on the homeward-bound stretch, loafing along slowly and picking up an occasional ship. A week after she captured us she caught a Spanish collier, and two weeks later took a French bark. She had about seven hundred prisoners aboard. We were treated well and all we did was to eat, drink, and sleep. They gave us tobacco that was something awful, but I guess it was the best they had. On Christmas we had a fine time aboard, fresh roast pork for dinner and coffee in the afternoon and dried ginger and all kinds of cakes and plenty of rum. We crossed the equator, heading north to run the British blockade back into German waters. There were a number of women among the prisoners and men who were husbands of some of the women. The *Wolf* put them into the captured Spanish collier, which she had kept, and sent them ashore. A German raider running the blockade was no place for women.

The *Wolf* headed north between Greenland and Iceland. It was rough and the ice was bad. We had to crush our way through it. A skipper has to have spunk to take a ship around the north of Iceland in the month of February. A Japanese ship captain among the prisoners committed suicide by jumping overboard one night. Then we headed south through the lines of the British blockade between Scotland and Norway.

Man, but we were nervous. The Germans were anxious, but they at least had something to do. With us prisoners all we could do was to wait and worry. I am as good a patriot as the next, but I certainly was praying for the success of the Germans in evading the British. Our ship was merely a converted steamer. If a Britisher tried to stop us the Germans would surely have tried to get away, and one shell would just have fixed us. We had eight wireless operators aboard, and everything on the air was picked up. The skipper of the *Wolf* knew just about all that was going on. Once we heard three British cruisers talking to each other right near us.

We got through all right and made Lubeck on the seventeenth of February. Then to Kiel, where the commander's mother came aboard. We all gave

him a cheer. He was a real gentleman. We were taken to prison camps and remained in Germany until the end of the war.

After the Armistice I felt I was getting too old for the strenuous life aboard sailing ships. I took to steam, although that was something of a comedown for an old-time sailor like me. I got a berth on the United States Lines, and here I am aboard the finest ship afloat, the *Leviathan*, with work that seems like loafing after all those voyages under canvas.

XI

AND HE LEARNED ABOUT MONKEYS FROM ME

On the high sea you sit around on the hatches in fair weather, and in the fo'c'sle in foul, and you say, "By Joe, think of what we'll do when we get on shore." And we think up all kinds of tricks. Sailors love to play tricks. There is no fun like playing tricks. That's the way to enjoy life, to laugh and be happy. I was playing tricks all the time when I was a sailor, and during my life since I have kept that ability to play tricks which I cultivated as a Jack Tar aboard the old windjammers. I think, by Joe, that one of the most valuable things I learned before the mast was the way to have fun and play funny tricks.

If you want to know a man the way is to find out what kind of fun he likes. I try to understand people that way. I try to understand myself that way. I say to myself, "Felix, by Joe, what kind of a fellow are you? The fun that you like best is a practical joke."

That is why I like to think of the trick I played with the monkeys. There are few things that I remember that are so funny. Maybe if I tell about those monkeys, you will say, "What a silly thing, what a trivial thing, what a foolish fellow is that son-of-a-gun of a sailor." All right. By Joe! In a way you can say of all sailors: They have more sense than anybody else, but they never get any sense. And if you see a big grown man playing silly tricks and howling with laughter at them, you can say, "He is a sailor, or he ought to be a sailor." So I am going to tell you the story of the monkeys, so that you can say: "By Joe, what a silly fellow is this son-of-a-gun of a sailor!"

I was in navigation school. To get my ticket, which would change me from a common Jack Tar into a skipper, I went to navigation school in Hamburg. But, although I was trying to rise in the world, I was old Jack Tar from tip to toe just the same.

Every morning, on my way to the school, I had to walk a long way around the big Zoölogical Garden, first this way and then, helm hard aport, that way. I thought, "By Joe, I have learned some mathematics, and I know that the diagonal is the shortest way from one corner of a square to another. Why can't I go through the Zoölogical Garden?" I found

I could get a paper, a passport, to go through the Zoölogical Garden, instead of around it. So every day I went through the Zoölogical Garden. It was not only shorter, but it was a lot of fun, and often I was late at the navigation school because I had looked at the animals so much.

I made friends with the deer, the bears, the tigers, and the lions. Then I found the monkey house, and that was real fun. It was a very big cage, thirty feet high, with trees in it and hundreds of monkeys, big ones, middle-sized ones, little ones, and one more comical than the other. By Joe, it was wonderful. And every day I saw a big monkey lying on his back and sunning his stomach. He was stretched out there rubbing his stomach and letting the sunlight warm it, and always he went *eetch-eetch-eetch*, the rubbing and the sunlight felt so good on his stomach. None of the small monkeys dared to go near him. You could see that he was the kind of fellow to give them plenty of licking. That monkey worried me. Every day he was lying there, and he never moved. I wanted to get him out of that position.

"Whooooo," I yelled at him. He opened his eyes a little bit and gave me a look as if saying, "Oh, it's just a lunatic," or "Oh, it's just a drunken sailor."

One day when I was walking through a street in Hamburg I noticed the window of a shop where they sold rifles. I saw a lot of guns and pistols—and a sling shot—you know, a handle with rubbers, and you pull out those rubbers and let a shot fly. You can shoot hard with those sling shots. I said, "By Joe, here is something for that fat monkey; it will be good medicine for him. It will give me joy."

I bought the sling shot and some small beans to shoot in it.

Wonderful sunshine it was that next morning. That fat monkey was lying there.

"By Joe," I said, "I will give you something for your stomach."

I pulled the rubbers back as far as they would stretch, and let go. And by Joe! Right on the stomach. That fat monkey let out a howl and gave a big jump. Up the tree he went. The other monkeys were all chattering. "What's the matter?" they thought. That fat monkey was the tyrant of the cage, and when he ran away howling there must be plenty the matter.

I waited for him to come down, but he stayed at the top of the tree, and I had to go on to navigation school.

Next morning I was looking to see what my big monkey would be doing. *Eetch-eetch-eetch*, and there he was again, scratching in the sun. Full stretch for the rubbers, *ping*, and a bean stung him again. Great commotion as he dashed up the tree.

Every day afterward that fat monkey stayed up in the tree and sunned his back. He was too high to shoot. "Now I have bought the sling shot," I thought, "and paid money for it, and what can I do with it? I was looking for another use for it. So I shot the other monkeys and made them move. There was chattering and jabbering and jumping and running and climbing. It was funny. Every morning I would laugh and laugh while I made those monkeys move—move on, boy. I had them trained. I had the whole monkey house trained. All I had to do was to make the movement of pulling back the rubbers—I didn't even have to have the sling shot—and all those monkeys would go wild. So I didn't take the sling shot along any more, but just made the movement.

There was a fine restaurant in that Zoölogical Garden, and one afternoon I had luncheon there with a friend. I told him.

"Say, can you explain to me the behavior of monkeys? The moment you make a move like that (I

made as if I were pulling back the rubbers) you have a revolution in the monkey house."

"Oh, you fool," he says. He was an educated fellow and had read about monkeys.

"I will bet," I said.

"You will lose," he replied.

"Then let us bet right away," I said, "two bottles of champagne. We will drink first and prove afterward."

We drank the two bottles of champagne and then went to the monkey house. I said, "Listen, boy, I want to bet fair. I will stay here and you go to the cage and make the proof. I want to convince you that I have nothing to do with it. You go and make the motion."

He went up to the bars of the monkey cage, and all the monkeys came down, expecting something to eat—turnips or nuts, maybe. They were all chattering there and holding out their hands. Then he took his hands and made the movement of pulling back the rubbers. By Joe, they moved—big monkeys, middle-sized monkeys, little monkeys. It was revolution in the monkey house.

"I told you so," I said. "I win the two bottles."

"I don't care about the two bottles," he replied,

angry. "I never heard about this in all the books I read. There is some mystery about monkeys the professors don't understand."

No champagne ever tasted so good, by Joe. It was the practical joke that was the finest part. Later on I told my friend about this trick. He was angry some more, and I had another laugh out of it.

There was a trick played while I was an officer on the *Kaiserin Augusta Victoria*. It was clever. We all had to admire those fellows, they were so smart. The first thing we knew about it was when we were about to leave port at five o'clock in the afternoon at high tide. Agamemnon was on the bridge. A man came up.

"Captain," he said, "I am Chief of Detectives."

"*Ja*, Chief of Detectives, *ja*," rumbled Agamemnon.

The man went on to say that there had been a big diamond-smuggling job out of the South African diamond fields, some kind of swindling, some kind of robbery.

"The smugglers with the diamonds are aboard your ship, Captain."

"*Ja*, smugglers with diamonds, *ja*."

"I am putting several detectives aboard, Captain,

and they will search during the voyage and find the diamonds."

"*Ja*, all right, *ja*."

The detectives came aboard dressed like swell fellows. They had dinner coats, and had fine table manners. We officers had heard about them from Agamemnon, and I said to myself, "By Joe, it will be interesting to see how they will find those diamonds." So I watched them. They were very slick. Sometimes I would see them going through cabins while the passengers were at dinner. Once I found them examining shoes, trying to find something hollow. Day after day they searched.

We had aboard a famous chess player who had recently won a big match or tournament some place, and he must have had plenty of brains, because chess is a very scientific game. "There is a man that I admire," I said. We Germans think it is very intellectual to play chess. I never could make much progress with it myself, because it is too scientific. There was another man aboard who said to the chess master:

"How would you like to play a game of chess with me, *meister?*"

"I don't play, by Joe," replied the master. He

played plenty of chess in his life and wasn't looking for more.

On different occasions, time after time, the other man said:

"How would you like to play a game of chess with me, *meister?*" until finally still another man said to the master:

"I wish you would play with him, *meister.* I am curious to know how well he understands chess, since he thinks he can play with you."

So the master said he would play, and by this time there was a lot of talk about it.

Then the man who had challenged the master made this condition:

"We will play with my pieces. I have a fine, valuable set of chess men."

The master agreed to that, and presently a big board was set up, with great beautiful chess men six inches high. They played. The man who challenged played so so, but not as good as the master. That master could play chess, by Joe. When pieces were captured they put them on a leather chair alongside.

One of the detectives was watching the game, and he had a great interest in those splendid chess men.

He picked up one as if he were admiring it. He shook it. Something rattled inside. With his back turned to the others he unscrewed it. The chess man had a hollow in it, which was full of diamonds. He put the piece back on the chair and went to his comrades.

"We got it. The diamonds are in the chess men. We got it, by Joe."

They decided to wait until the ship arrived in port and then have the customs officers make the arrest. Meanwhile, they had done their job. No more searching. They would have a good time. And they had a good time. Those detectives were having drinks and playing cards and laughing all the time.

We had another man on board whom I admired even more than the chess master. This was a funny old professor, who sat all day on the promenade deck surrounded by books. You never saw him without his books, and he was always reading them, never looking at anybody, never talking, always reading. He must be very scientific, too. "Luckner," I said to myself, "there is a man you should respect. You never could study and learn, and he is always studying and learning. He seems to like it." So I watched that old professor and once or twice tried to talk to him and find out how a man could like to study so much. But

he was always too busy with his nose in the books to say anything to me.

When we got to port and the man with the magnificent chess set went ashore they arrested him.

"Open your luggage, you have those smuggled diamonds."

He opened his luggage.

"Get out your chess set."

He got the chess set out. They unscrewed the chess men and poured out diamonds.

"By Joe, we got you, you scoundrel."

"You better get an expert," said the man.

They got an expert, and he said the diamonds were all paste. Those detectives felt like fools.

The funny old professor had gone ashore and was safely away. He was the one with diamonds. The smuggling gang had learned that the police were going to put detectives on the ship to search for the diamonds and had laid a plot to trick them. They had the man with the chess set aboard to draw attention with his chess men, knowing that the detectives' minds would be attracted to him and that they would examine the chess men and find the fake diamonds. The presence of the chess champion aboard fitted right in with their plan. The old professor had the

Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

The Westfalen, *which played a heroic part in the Battle of Jutland.*

Photograph by Hal Phyfe

THE SEA DEVIL

recalls how he made the monkeys jump.

diamonds hidden in hollows in his books and was never suspected. Everybody admired him, even Agamemnon. When he was leaving the ship Agamemnon went up to him in his ponderous way and shook hands with him.

"Professor, I am sorry to see you go." And Agamemnon's voice was like some deep thunder in the earth.

Later on the old professor wrote a letter to the detectives thanking them for not having been so impolite as to bother him.

When I heard the whole story I felt good. "By Joe," I said, "I am not such a fool, after all. I could not understand why a man could like to study so much. But he wasn't studying at all. Probably he has no more brains for study than I have."

XII

A BOTTLE OF BEER AND LIMBURGER CHEESE, AND THE SULPHURIC ACID IN THE HAIR TONIC

From the merchant service I passed into the Imperial Navy, and that gave me a greater opportunity than I had ever dreamed of for playing fine tricks. A naval officer is more grand and dignified than a common, kick-him-around, put-him-in-jail sailor, and the grander and the more dignified you are, the funnier is the trick.

Once I was with a friend, another officer, in a fine restaurant in the country. We were in naval uniform, fine, with white trousers and everything. I made him a bet. He had a little too much beer or he would not have accepted it, but you know what a man will do when a few bottles have made him feel good. He bets on anything.

"I will bet," I said, "that I can pour a bottle of beer in your pants pocket, and you won't feel it."

"You are crazy," he replied; "of course I will feel it."

"Well, I will bet you won't—a bottle of champagne on it."

"Very well, I like champagne, and if you are foolish enough to make a bet that you cannot possibly win I will gladly drink champagne at your expense."

So I took a bottle of iced beer and poured it in his pants pocket.

"Ow-ow," he yelled, "it's cold. I feel it. I feel it."

"Then you win—waiter, bring a bottle of champagne at my expense."

By Joe, you should have seen him. There he was in a fashionable place with his white navy pants wet all the way down the leg with beer. He smelled like a brewery. And we were a long way from home, and he had to travel in that shape.

In addition, he got hell from his mother. She did his washing. "Your clothes this week," she said, "they smell like a brewery."

But he got even with me. Some time later I was going to Kiel for a naval reception, and I smelled something. What a smell! On the train it was awful. I looked at the people in my compartment. What's the matter with them? I had to leave. I complained

to the conductor, and he had an argument with them. Then, every place I went, that same smell. "What's the matter, by Joe, what's the matter with the world?" I got to the reception. I had to go there. When I took off my cap at the door people made a face. Where did that smell come from? Then I smelled my cap. By Joe, Limburger cheese. That friend in whose pocket I had poured that bottle of cold beer had put a piece of Limburger cheese in the peak of my cap.

I had a dog that didn't have any brains. "By Joe," I thought, "that dog needs something to stir him up, something to make him think better." I was at torpedo school at the time, and I go down on record as the first man who ever shot a dog out of a torpedo tube.

"Come on, Fritz, I'll show you something," I said to that dog. "You will have a new experience, and they say that experience is a good teacher."

I pushed him into the torpedo tube and put on six pounds of pressure. It was on a torpedo boat, and the torpedo goes through the air first, and not under water. I fired that dog as if he were a torpedo in a naval battle. *Shoosh*—and he shot out, ears standing up on each side of his head. He put his feet forward

like a brake, but he couldn't stop. He hit the water and started to swim back. He was not exactly an intellectual dog when he came back, but he had brains enough to stay away from that torpedo tube. He would give it a sidelong glance and run. By Joe, he would run every time he saw it.

You know about mosquitoes! They can be funny, too. How they can bite and sting, and the more you slap them, the more they come around. In America you have good mosquitoes, plenty, but in Africa—you should see them there!

It was the time when I was a naval officer aboard the *Panther*, which was stationed at our former German colony, the Cameroons. Plenty of hunting there, and I did a lot of it, although I never did have very good success. But once, while nothing was killed, something was nearly killed—Gier, Lieutenant Gier; and that was funny. I played a joke with mosquitoes.

There was a leopard that was eating the cattle of the natives, the niggers. So Gier and I said we must shoot that leopard. We got our guns and plenty of cartridges, and then bought a he-goat, a fine old smelling he-goat. The leopard has a good nose, and he will smell that goat two miles down the breeze. Those natives were laughing at us as we went along leading

that strong perfume of a he-goat. We went to a good place to wait for the leopard, and there tied the goat to a stake and got ready. There was an old storehouse full of empty cases on one side and a chicken house on the other. It was a bright night with a beautiful big moon.

"We hide and wait for that leopard," I said to Gier. "I will wait in the storeroom. You wait in the chicken house."

"All right," he said.

You see, I knew this place. I had looked over it in the daytime. And that chicken house was full of mosquitoes. By Joe, what mosquitoes.

I went into the storeroom and Gier into the chicken house. We waited for the leopard. It was all right in the storeroom. I arranged the cases, and it was comfortable. I put some empty cases in front of me, so if the leopard jumped at me he jumped in the cases. I was tired, and pretty soon I went to sleep. Never mind the leopard. Gier is there for the leopard. He has plenty to keep him awake.

"Felix, by Joe, you son-of-a-gun." And Gier woke me up.

"By Joe," I said, "your face—that is a hell of a face."

He was groping like a blind man.

"I can't see any more," he said. "My eyes got swelled up."

In there he was breathless for the leopard, and he fought off the mosquitoes as well as he could. They won the battle. It seemed to be getting very dark outside. He lit a match. He could hardly see it. His eyes had swollen closed. And you should have seen his face. By Joe, I laughed.

"Didn't the mosquitoes bite you?" he asked.

"Mosquitoes?" I replied. "There are no mosquitoes where I am."

"Well, you always were lucky, Felix." He was trying to get his eyes open.

That strong goat was still there. The leopard must have heard Gier fighting the mosquitoes, for he never came around. We took the goat and went back to the ship. We sold that goat for ten marks. We couldn't eat him. He was much too strong.

I was an officer aboard the dreadnaught *Preussen*, and I had some fine hair tonic. I used it very little, but it kept disappearing at a great rate.

"By Joe," I thought, "there is somebody who thinks well of his hair and is keeping it in good order with my hair tonic."

Having been a sailor myself, I knew that sailors, some of them at any rate, were likely to steal hair tonic, or anything else. "I will keep watch," I thought, "and then that thief had better look out." I had stolen plenty of ship's stores and officers' supplies when I was a sailor, but I never did like to have anything stolen from me. That's different. If I had still been a sailor I could have had much sympathy with the sailor who was stealing the officer's hair tonic, but an officer has different ideas from a sailor. I kept watch, but detected nothing. That fellow was wise. I saw that he was using my hair tonic at the time of the officers' mess, when I had to be in the mess room.

The ship's surgeon was a friend of mine, and I asked him:

"Say, Doctor, give me an idea of what can be done about that fellow who is using my hair tonic."

The doctor, he gave me an idea, by Joe. He got some stuff out of the laboratory. There was only a little left in the bottle of hair tonic, and he made a mixture just right, just enough to have a good strong effect on somebody's scalp. What he put in the hair tonic was sulphuric acid.

Then he told the orderlies in the hospital quarters

chat they might expect a patient during the officers' mess, sometime in the early afternoon.

"This patient will have trouble with his hair," he said. "He will have a pain in his hair and scalp."

He told them to telephone him at the officers' mess the moment such a patient appeared.

That noon it was only a few minutes past twelve when the message came.

"The patient is here with the hair trouble."

The doctor and I went to the hospital quarters. There the patient was groaning and howling. He was a clerk with a head of fiery red hair. He was always very proud of that hair, combing, sleeking it, and, as I now saw, putting my hair tonic on it. He thought his hair fascinated all the girls.

I stood to one side where he did not see me, while the doctor spoke to him.

"*Was ist los*, what is the matter? Why are you tearing at your hair?"

"Oh, oh, Doctor, it is burning. There has been some mistake. Oh, oh, such a burning. Somebody put something in the hair tonic."

"What hair tonic was it?"

"Oh, oh," he kept groaning. He did not want to tell

which hair tonic it was. He did not want to say he had been stealing my hair tonic.

"*Donnerwetter*," said the doctor. "Which hair tonic was it?"

"Oh, oh, Doctor, I don't remember."

"Then I can do nothing for you. I must see the bottle and what is in the bottle, so that I will know what medicine to put on your head to stop the burning."

"Oh, oh, Doctor, I used some hair tonic of Count von Luckner's."

Then I came in.

"You son-of-a-gun, by Joe, you have been taking my hair tonic for two weeks. Now you have some tonic on your head that you will remember."

The doctor put something on his head to stop the burning. Nothing more was done to him, because he had had plenty, especially when his hair began to fall out. The acid made it come out in patches. He looked funny, by Joe. That red hair, of which he was so proud and which used to fascinate the girls, looked as if there were moths in it. The sailors on board heard all about it, and they used to say:

"Hello, Werner, that was fine hair tonic of yours. It makes a man look handsome."

On Werner's birthday his father came to visit him and looked with astonishment at what used to be such fine red hair. Werner explained to him that he had got some infection at a barber shop, which had made his hair come out.

XIII

IT MAY BE GRAND OPERA FOR SOME BUT IT'S YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE O' RUM FOR ME

I HAD just become an officer in the Imperial Navy when one fellow, a big, pompous captain, told me, by way of giving me a little encouragement, by Joe:

"Well, Count, you are now a naval officer, all right. But being a naval officer is something different from being a common sailor—it needs more. For a naval officer hauling ropes and climbing rigging means nothing, but education means much. In the Imperial Navy the tradition is that an officer should be an educated man and a gentleman. You didn't learn anything in school. You haven't learned anything since you left school. Look at yourself, and you will see the result. Your behavior and manners are those of a common sailor and not of a naval officer. When you talk it is not fine German, and you display nothing but ignorance. You will get nowhere in the

Navy. You do not belong in the Navy. Still, I will give you a bit of advice, which may help you. You must try to understand what it means to be a naval officer and try to get a little polish. You learn something about music, art, and literature. You must go to symphony and opera and the art galleries and read something of Goethe and Schiller."

I said, "All right." And I thought, "By Joe, that fellow is an old son-of-a-gun, but he is right. I know nothing about symphony or opera or art or Schiller or Goethe. Look at yourself, Luckner. You think you are a naval officer, but you are only Phelax, the old sailor. Why didn't you learn something in school? Why didn't you go to the Gymnasium and the University? Look at these other officers. They can talk about philosophy. They can tell how they have listened to symphonies and operas. They understand art. They can quote out of Schiller and Goethe. What can you quote? 'Pull, sailor, pull, pull for the shore.' They are officers and gentlemen and you are nothing but an ignorant fo'c'sle sailor."

I felt bad. I felt as I did those years before, when, an overgrown boy, I couldn't learn anything. I felt like running away to sea again.

One evening I had nothing to do, no business, no

amusement. You know how it is to be looking around like that, bored. By Joe, I thought, I have nothing to do, nothing to occupy the time—now I can do something for my education. Now I can try to learn something about music and art and Goethe and Schiller. That was fine, but how can you find a way to improve your education at seven o'clock in the evening?

I was walking down the street, and you know how we have advertising signs on columns in Germany. Theaters and amusements are advertised in that way. I saw the signs, and thought, "Maybe they will show me a way to get a little education tonight." I saw an announcement of a variety show, where they have girls dancing. That would be interesting, but it was not education. Then I saw: "Kiel Hoff Theater, *Lohengrin*." By Joe, that was just it. *Lohengrin*, I knew, was something for the education. I had heard also that in *Lohengrin* is the swan, and Lohengrin navigates in the boat with the swan for a tug. That was good. Boats I could understand. "By Joe," I thought, "I will see what kind of a sailor old Lohengrin makes. What kind of course will he set? How will he come to anchor?" Maybe I, ignorant as I was, could tell him about that? I could be a great critic on the subject. So I started out for *Lohengrin*

to improve my education and enjoy a little seamanship.

At the theater they asked me whether I wanted parquet or parterre. I had been to theaters often, the kind where sailors go, but never to one where they had parquet and parterre. I said, "I will take parterre," although I didn't know the difference.

The usher showed me my seat, and for a minute I stood looking around, it was so magnificent. There was a big candelabra in the middle, which had a wonderful shine. And all around were people who seemed right at home with opera and education. "By Joe," I thought, "here are hundreds of people who are not ignorant sailors." When I had seen enough and was ready to sit down, by Joe, what's the matter? I sat down with a heavy bump on the floor, and my head hit the back of the seat. I didn't understand about those seats, which have springs in them and you have to hold them down as you sit. That seat had sprung back and left me to go down the hatchway. "By Joe," I thought, "I begin my education by hurting myself on the floor and bumping my head." It is a dirty trick. Educated people do that, but a sailor wouldn't. Because to a sailor the dirtiest trick you can play is to pull his chair

away when he is sitting down. Everybody around, all those people familiar with music, were looking at the naval officer in the fine uniform who was sitting on the floor. I arose, took a good hold of that seat, kept it fast, and anchored myself in it. Then I was ready for Lohengrin to arrive, navigating with the swan.

The music began. It was terrible. You hear many strange noises at sea, but never anything like that. Unloading cargo in port or running through the storm, you think your ears can get used to anything, but that music was worse than a cargo of rattling chain and squealing pigs, worse than the mainmast going overboard in the teeth of the gale. All the instruments seemed to be playing, each for himself, and none of them paying any attention to what the others were saying. On the stage there were funny people singing funny things, although it didn't sound like singing. I could tell the language was German, but the words didn't seem to make any sense.

"By Joe," I thought, "I need some education, but how can I get any out of that? Never mind, I can't understand the music, and I can't understand what they are talking about up there, but when Lohengrin comes sailing I will be able to understand the maneuver he makes to get alongside." So I kept

waiting for Lohengrin, and that music and singing kept getting worse and worse.

I looked around at the people to see if they understood it, if they liked it. They were all intent. They seemed to be having great pleasure. "How can that be?" I thought. I thought it must be impossible, but no, I was the only one looking around. All the rest were listening, like a skipper listening for sirens in a fog. "Maybe to be educated you have to enjoy this," I thought. "How then can I ever be educated?" I was feeling bad, down-hearted. I was thinking how I could never be anything but an ignorant sailor.

Then suddenly, four points to the starboard, I saw a man who was sleeping. He was bald-headed, and his chin was on his shirt front. He was sound asleep. "That is the thing I like to see," I thought. "He doesn't understand it any more than I do. I am not the only one who doesn't enjoy this. And he is no ignorant sailor." He didn't look like a sailor. He looked as if he had money. I kept watching him as he was nodding there, and I was in better spirits. A feeling of peace came over my heart. I wanted to say: "*Wie geht's, Landsmann*, we are brothers. Isn't that music something fierce? You are a fine man. You go to sleep. I would go to sleep, only I am not tired."

I looked around some more and noticed the man in the seat next to me on my port side. He had a book, a big book, long and wide and thick. He had it open on his knees and was looking in it, listening to the music and looking in the book. "By Joe," I thought, "what the hell's wrong with this fellow? He comes to read a book here?" I leaned my head over and took a look at the open pages of the book. They were covered with notes, music. Then I understood. That was the music they were playing. He was reading it as they played it. This must be a smart fellow. He is educated. Luckner, if you could only have an education like that. He enjoys this music plenty, and, not content with listening to it, he must read it also. And once more I felt like an ignorant sailor. Here was a man who understood this *Lohengrin*, while the only thing I could understand about it was when Lohengrin would make fast to the dock.

Then, as I was taking a look at the book across the man's knees—there was enough light from the stage, and I have sharp eyes—I saw the word across the top of the page—*Electra*. That was the title of the book, *Electra*. "What is the matter with that man? He is crazy. The opera is *Lohengrin*, and the book is *Electra*." He had the wrong book. I felt like

telling him, "Boy, you have the wrong book. You had better go out and get the right book." I felt I should do that. It would be a favor to him, so that he would know the music on the page was not the music they were playing. But I thought I had better not. "By Joe," I said to myself, "you keep still, or you may make some mistake and show you have no education." Then I had another idea. "That man is a bluff. He is pretending to read the music in that book and is nothing but a faker trying to make an impression. He does not know enough to understand that he has the wrong book. All he knows is how to make people think he is smart and has plenty of education. I am an ignorant sailor, but I do not make anybody think I am anything else. I do not bluff like this fellow." The next thing, I had an idea that all these people were pretending. They were putting on they liked this terrible music, when they didn't understand it at all. They were bluffing. They didn't like it any better than I or the fellow over there asleep. He was a fine chap. I felt like climbing down the row of seats to him and shaking his hand and saying, "Hey, Charley, you and I are the only honest men in the place."

All the time I was waiting for Lohengrin to come

navigating with the swan, but there was no sign of seamanship anywhere. All kinds of curious things were going on up there on the stage, but nothing that would make a sailor feel at home. It was long. Finally I got tired. I couldn't stand that music any longer. I left the theater and went to the variety show I had seen advertised. There you have more change. If you don't like something it doesn't last long and the next act comes on. You have always a chance to find something that you will like.

The next day I told my brother officers about my experience, and they laughed. They told me I had made a mistake. It wasn't *Lohengrin* I was hearing, but *Electra.* The bill I had seen announcing *Lohengrin* was for the next day. The opera I had gone to for the beginning of my education was Richard Strauss's *Electra,* one of the most difficult and complicated pieces in modern music. "By Joe," I said to myself, "an ignorant sailor even in looking for some education is liable to run into trouble." And after that I gave up hope of becoming educated in music and art and Schiller and Goethe.

XIV

WHEN THE KAISER CALLED ME IN TO ENTERTAIN THE KING OF ITALY

By Joe, in those days when I was before the mast I should never have dreamed it—that common Jack Tar Phelax would ever be in the society of kings. Yet that is what came about. I was a guest at the banquet of various monarchs—the Kaiser, different kings of the various German states, the King of Italy, the Czar of Russia. And those were times when I used to sit and think most of the days when I was aloft in the rigging or swabbing the deck or bawled out by a skipper or mate. It was different now, with all those kings around.

The Kaiser paid a visit to the fleet at Helgoland, where I was serving as a junior lieutenant. I was invited. "By Joe," I thought, "I had better take care to eat properly and show that I know how to behave in social life." The affair was held aboard one of the battleships, everything very smart. By Joe, I watched my step. I didn't know what all the forks

were for, but I watched to see what the others did and I did just the same. I didn't make any bad breaks. The only trouble was that I ate so fast. I was hungry. A sailor has an appetite, and, besides, after all those hungry days at sea, I thought that now, since I had risen in the world, I might as well eat plenty. Some of the others were joking with me about my appetite. "Never mind," I thought, "I will show them how a real salt-sea sailor can eat." The Kaiser was amused. Not that he objected. He knew that I was an old-time sea dog.

After the banquet the Kaiser had me tell stories of my life at sea.

"If Your Majesty will permit," I said, "I will tell you the one about the rooster that was no good. By Joe, Your Majesty, the skipper thought that old rooster couldn't persuade the hens to lay any eggs."

And I related the story of the captain of the *Niobe*, and how we stole the eggs the hen laid and the rooster got the blame. Everybody laughed, because I told it in low sailor's German. In fact, I have never been able to talk high German quite correctly. I can never get over the rude, comical species of seafaring *platdeutsch* that is spoken along the docks in Hamburg and Bremen and by sailors on ships.

After that the Kaiser often had me tell stories, old fo'c'sle tales. It earned me his favor, and he helped me greatly. I can thank my windjammer yarn-spinning for much of whatever success I had in the Imperial Navy, for advancement in rank and for my getting command of my sailing ship sea raider during the war. The Kaiser was good to me, and I will never cease being grateful. He may have had his faults and made his mistakes, maybe he was too proud and too vain of his own power, but I always found him a kindly and sympathetic person.

In 1913 the King of Italy was the guest of the Emperor. There was to be a grand reception, naval festivities and such, and a magnificent banquet aboard the dreadnaught *Kaiser*. The Emperor sent me the order to come to the banquet and entertain with some magical tricks. I had learned quite a little sleight of hand and conjuring with a band of East Indian fakirs in Australia and always liked to work a bit of sorcery for the amusement of my brother officers.

"By Joe," I thought, "magic tricks for the Kaiser and the King of Italy. I must do something fine. I must not disgrace myself."

And I started in to think of some good effect among the tricks I knew, something bewildering.

I have never seen anything so wonderful as that night. The *Kaiser* was a magnificent ship. She was one of those afterward sunk at Scapa Flow. The banquet was on the poop deck, which had a sun sail over it. The deck was thirty-two yards broad and ninety yards long. Everything was brilliantly lighted, the tables furnished with splendors of silver and cut glass. A hundred and fifty guests were there, all men. There was the Emperor, the King of Italy, Prince Henry of Prussia, the Duke of Abruzzi, Count Montecuccoli, pronounced Montykookoly, who was the Austrian Chief of Staff, members of the Italian staff, the Chief of the German Fleet, and many princes, dukes, and other nobles and officers. The King of Italy was in German hussar uniform. Somebody had given him boots that were too small. They pinched him and hurt. He was a good-natured, humorous man, and he would stand first on one foot and then on the other and pinch his mouth and blow like this —*pfff*, *pfff*. The Kaiser and he spoke together in English.

The other ships of the fleet lay all around. On one, between the masts, gleamed the Italian coat of arms in full colors, made of colored lights. All the searchlights were playing, six hundred searchlights. They

spelled the name of the King of Italy on the sky in letters a mile long at zenith. On deck we had an orchestra of forty-five pieces and the ship's band of the Kaiser's yacht *Hohenzollern*. They played beautiful music at intervals. On the ships all around the sailors were lined up for singing, seventy-five thousand men. They sang sailors' songs and old German songs and Italian songs. They sang the national Italian song—seventy-five thousand voices. You cannot imagine hearing something like that. One searchlight beat the time across the sky, like the giant baton of some unearthly conductor. Two speed boats raced incessantly around us. Aboard were Italians of Berlin who shouted: "*Viva Vittorio Emanuele, viva Italia.*"

The banquet itself was extraordinarily good, and I ate plenty. Then came speeches. The Kaiser spoke first, welcoming the King of Italy. The King of Italy replied. Then Count "Montykookoly," the Austrian Chief of Staff, spoke. Entertainments followed. Some navy boys did gymnastics. Then I was called before the royal table to do my magic trick.

"By Joe," I thought as I went over there, "I hope this works all right."

I had planned an effect which I thought should surprise those kings a good deal.

"Well, Luckner," said the Kaiser, "let's see what kind of magic you can give us."

"If Your Majesty will permit," I replied, "I will try to perform something that will seem to be a miracle." Then I turned to a steward and said: "Give me an egg, by Joe, I need an egg."

He brought me an egg, and I took from my pocket an old red handkerchief, the kind that sailors and fishermen have. Then I said:

"Here, Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, and Your Excellencies, you will see that I have an egg in one hand and an old sailor's handkerchief in the other. I will now put the handkerchief in the egg."

And I stuffed the handkerchief into the egg.

"And now," I went on, "in whose pocket shall I make it appear?"

"In mine," cried the Kaiser.

"Very well, Your Majesty," and I made a few passes and then told the Kaiser, "If Your Majesty will deign to put your hand in the inside pocket of your coat you will find the red handkerchief."

"I will find that handkerchief in my pocket?" The Emperor wouldn't believe it.

"Yes, Your Majesty, in your inside pocket."

So the Kaiser reached into his inside pocket and

pulled out the old sailor's handkerchief, and he said, "Well, by Joe."

"And now," I said, "if Your Majesty will deign to return the handkerchief to me I will put it into the egg again and will cause it to appear in the pocket of anyone Your Majesty may designate."

"In the pocket of the King of Italy," cried the Kaiser.

I went through the same process again and bade the King of Italy look in his inside pocket. The hussar's coat was tight, and he had to open two buttons to get at the pocket. "Eh," he cried, "here it is." And the Italians all laughed and cheered.

Then Count "Montykookoly" spoke up.

"Have it appear in my inside pocket."

He was a smart fellow, that Montecuccoli. He had no inside pocket in his coat.

"Very well, Your Excellency," I replied, and stuffed the handkerchief in the egg. I made the magic movements, and then snapped my fingers angrily and exclaimed, "How stupid I am! I am sorry, Your Excellency, but I made a mistake. I have made the handkerchief appear in the pocket in the tail of your coat."

Montecuccoli was surprised when he reached into

his coat-tail pocket and pulled out the old red handkerchief.

I then made the handkerchief appear in the back trouser pocket of Prince Henry.

That witchcraft made a sensation, and then I went on with some other tricks, small things that didn't amount to much. When I got through and left they were talking about that mysterious handkerchief business. The Kaiser was very temperamental. He was curious. He wanted to know how I had done the trick. After everything was over he called me and made me tell him.

"Your Majesty," I said, "as for putting the handkerchief in the egg I switched the real egg the waiter gave me and used a false egg I had, one that was hollow and had a hole in the top."

"But"—he was impatient—"how did you get that dirty old red handkerchief into our pockets?"

"It was this way, Your Majesty. Before the banquet I had the valets put an old red handkerchief in a certain pocket of each man at the table."

"Luckner, you devil," said the Kaiser. "You fooled us all."

A week or so later at a big reception I met the other guests who had been at the Kaiser's table. "By Joe,

Luckner"—they gave me hell—"what did you do?" And each one said his wife had found a dirty old sailor's handkerchief in his pocket. You know how suspicious a wife is. And the wives of those dignitaries said: "Say, boy, where did you get this terrible thing? By Joe, where did you get this dirty old red handkerchief?" And the wives thought that maybe their husbands were in some awful, low-down place. I couldn't leave them in trouble like that. I explained the whole trick to them, so they could explain it to their wives. They laughed, and said, "Luckner, some day you will be hanged."

And so the Kaiser's banquet was a success for me. It was a success for everybody. It was magnificent, and at the end the dreadnaught *Kaiser* reviewed the fleet with her searchlight. The two kings reviewed the fleet.

I was at a banquet of the Czar. A German naval squadron was on a visit to Russian harbors, and the Czar invited them to dine with him at the famous Tsarskoe-Selo. We were taken to the palace in a fleet of old-fashioned droshkys. The coachmen had long beards and big fur caps. We came to a high wall, which looked as though it might surround a jail. A regiment of Cossacks kept a patrol around it.

When you were inside you saw above the wall the tips of the tall lances of the Cossacks. It was an enormous place with trees and parks and many houses, Japanese houses, Chinese houses, all kinds of houses. There were beautiful fountains, like those of Versailles. You see a white marble palace, and you say to yourself, "That is where the Czar lives." But you find out that the magnificent palace is only the royal stable. Farther along, through the park, you suddenly face the palace.

By Joe, it is grand. At the door are tall Cossacks standing on guard. You go into the entrance hall, which has walls, like a peacock, of colored enamel, all inlaid mosaic, a masterpiece of Slavonic art. In another hall you see a huge Russian coat of arms in marvelous inlaid mosaic. In another hall were pictures in gold frames with gold crowns at the top—paintings of the Russian Czars. And few of them died a natural death. "By Joe," I said to them, "what is all your magnificence worth compared to your life?" I saw on a wall a rug which the Sultan Mohammed V presented to the Empress Catherine. It was embroidered with rubies and diamonds.

In a big room the guests were gathered—German naval officers, Russian officers, and Russian courtiers

and nobles. There were Russian military uniforms of all sorts, and all wonderful. No uniform was finer than the Russian, magnificent boots with the trousers bagged over the top. I had to keep looking at some of the cavalry officers—what fine fellows, long beards, long coats. There was a great contrast of faces. The officers, Russian and German, had something in common, intelligent faces, stupid faces, but fairly honest faces, the faces of disciplined men and men who hope to fight some day. You could see that the military officers of the Czar were loyal and good soldiers. But look at the courtiers and aristocracy. Their faces freeze you, cynical, egotistical. You can see that they are people crazy with the sense of their power and wealth, who think they are so far from the rest of mankind that the rest of mankind has no claim on them. They are cruel. You can see cruelty in their smiles and their eyes. If they fancy they are neglected or slighted, all the devil's evil rises in them. They are full of envy. Hatred is born in them.

Enter the Major of the Court, a tall man with a long beard who carries a stick that has a crown on it. He knocks the stick on the floor, and everybody stands at attention as the Czar comes in. By Joe, the Czar is something to look at. He wears a white

fur cap with a sparkling rosette of diamonds on it. At the middle of the forehead is the great glowing Romanoff diamond. Across the Czar's breast is a glittering row of decorations.

We were all standing at the many tables in the banqueting hall. The Czar's table was a long one that had been made in honor of the Sultan Mohammed V when he visited the Empress Catherine. It was of thick mahogany and rosewood. Everyone's place at all the tables was marked by a Russian coat of arms inlaid in the wood with precious stones. There was a signal. Sixty ladies of the court came trooping in. They wore marvelous dresses and were beautiful. Another signal, and all the men stood at attention. The Czarina entered with her daughters. She looked wonderful, with her diamonds. Everyone made a deep bow as she passed.

Now the signal was given to sit down. We would have something to eat. I was curious to see what kind of chow came out of the Czar's galley, and I was hungry. Lights were coming in. By Joe, do we eat lights? From many doors servants came carrying each a brilliant illumination. It was wonderful to see, and then it was still more wonderful to taste. There were cakes of ice illuminated by electric lights inside.

Deep holes were scooped in the ice, and these holes were filled with caviar. It was an especially fine royal caviar, by Joe, and I always did love caviar. "By Joe," I thought, "I must have plenty before it gets away." And I did have plenty. I ate that caviar as fast as I could.

Then came other courses. There was birds'-nest soup, and then there was mammoth's meat. It had been dug up in Siberia out of the ice, where it had been kept naturally refrigerated for thousands of years. Eating that ancient mammoth's meat is more common now, but then it was something new and startling. Champagne was served in glasses a foot high, and I always did like champagne. The courses came fast. No sooner had you started one than they were taking it away. "By Joe," I thought, "you better eat fast, Luckner, or you will go away hungry. These sons-of-guns will take the bread right out of your mouth." Eating fast is one of the things I do best. I learned the art as a sailor. So I managed to get most of those courses into my stomach before the waiters got them away from me. What I did not know was that, while the Russians serve their courses fast, there are very many courses. There they came one after another, and it would seem as if they would

never end. I had filled up on caviar to begin with, and now I had put away the better part of the first three or four courses. I can eat plenty, but with that kind of business it was not long before I couldn't eat any more. And the course still kept coming. There I was, all stuffed, and the Russians might think I was not eating any more because I didn't like the Czar's galley. They might be offended. There was nothing I could do about it. I just sat there and looked around

I looked at the Czar. "By Joe," I thought, "here is this great emperor. I wonder if he knows he has an old fo'c'sle, swab-the-deck, Jack Tar sailor at his imperial board. Can he guess that this ignorant seaman, unaccustomed to imperial society, has stuffed himself so full, like a pig, that he can eat no more? What would this mighty emperor say if somebody told him that?"

Then I looked at the Czar's daughters. What handsome girls! "Who will marry them?" I wondered. They would make something fine if they were peasant girls in wooden shoes. And they are royal princesses of the greatest empire in the world.

I never guessed, the greatest philosopher and pessimist could not have guessed, the terrible fate in store for that proud Czar and Czarina and those pretty

royal girls—the dirty cellar in Siberia, the squad of Bolshevik murderers. Some people have a terrible past. Some people have a terrible future. But everything was gay and brilliant at the Czar's banquet, and there was not the slightest shadow of the terrible future.

I had another experience with royalty, in which there were no palaces, banquets, and magnificent gayeties but, instead, things that were dark and gruesome and terrible. It began with a meeting of good friends, all young naval officers. We were in a private room of a restaurant, and had a good dinner, and then sat a long time drinking beer and singing songs. It was about three o'clock in the morning when a loud shot banged out. By Joe, what's the matter? What is this? In the wash room was the sound of a falling body, and there we found a comrade, one of our merry party. He had killed himself. We had noticed that he had been sad all evening, with something heavy on his mind, but had not thought anything in particular of it. Now we all felt bad. It was such a fearful end for our jolly party. Well, there was nothing to do about it. We thought the best thing to do was to get the body out of the restaurant without creating any excitement. The shot had not caused

any alarm. We carried our unfortunate comrade out quietly, pretending that he was drunk, and put him in a cab. Then we didn't know what to do. We thought we had better take the body to the morgue and let it rest there for a while, while we notified the bereaved family.

So, to the morgue we went, a terrible place, with naked bodies lying on slabs. There the superintendent received our friend in a cold, businesslike way, that made your blood freeze. We were standing there sad and depressed, when the superintendent took me aside and said:

"Come over here. Have you any idea who this man might be?"

And he took me to a slab where an extraordinarily tall man was lying.

"He is no poor man," remarked the superintendent.

I agreed with him. When I looked at the body I saw the face well cared for and the teeth, too. The hair was carefully combed, long hair arranged from one side to another to hide a bald head.

"No," I said, "he is not a poor man. Maybe he is a count or a baron."

His clothes were hanging near by. I looked at them.

They were the very best, gray-striped trousers and a Prince Albert coat. From the looks of the clothes I judged he must be a count or a baron.

"Where did he come from?" I asked the superintendent.

"They found him at the Goose Market," was the reply.

The Goose Market. That was a tough section near Sanck Pauli, the waterfront sailors' hangout. The Goose Market was no place for a baron or a count to be found, either alive or dead.

"He was lying on a street corner," the superintendent went on, and he described the corner as a most disreputable one, on a kind of red-light street.

"By Joe," I thought, "this baron or count has been in fine society."

He had been found lying there by a doctor who was passing along the street on his way to an urgent case. The doctor at once saw that the man had fallen from a heart attack. The doctor could not wait. He called a cab to take the body to the morgue. But the cab driver would not do it. "No," he said. "How do I know whether I will be paid? Who is there to pay me?" And he drove off in his cab. The only thing the doctor could do was to call a porter, one of those

Hamburg porters who carry stuff in wheelbarrows. The porter had his wheelbarrow with him, and they bundled the body into it. The porter was a very poor man, who was willing to take a chance on getting paid a little. And so the body was trundled to the morgue in the wheelbarrow. "By Joe," I thought, "that is an awful thing for a baron or a count."

The next day the story came out, although they tried to hush it up. The mysterious dead man in the morgue was the King of Denmark, Frederick VIII. He was stopping with the Queen at the Stadt Hamburg, the best hotel, and in the evening he had told the Queen he was going out for a walk with his aid-de-camp. According to the story, he was on his way to see a girl. He left his aid-de-camp to wait for him and went on. The aid-de-camp waited for hours. No King. The aid-de-camp, thinking he might have forgotten and returned to the hotel to the Queen, went to the hotel. The moment the Queen saw him she cried, "Where is the King?" The poor aid-de-camp knew where the King had gone and was distressed.

"His Majesty will be here soon," he said, and advised the Queen to go to bed and not wait any longer.

Then he went out and waited for the King some more, and when the King still did not appear he

grew more and more nervous. Finally he went to the police, and a search was made, and the body was found in the morgue.

That was a bad scandal, and the government made every effort to keep it quiet. The girl whom the King was said to have gone to see was arrested. She had not known who it was that had visited her. He kept incognito even to the extent of tearing the tailor's labels out of his clothes, so that his identity might not be guessed. The girl, however, was sure to see the stories and pictures in the newspapers. The police arrested her and kept her locked up so that she could not talk. The story was whispered around, however. Anyway, the moment I saw the reports of the King of Denmark's rather mysterious death, I immediately remembered the body of the very tall man I had seen in the morgue.

The King's body was sent back to Denmark in a cruiser, and there was a great funeral ceremony. As the cruiser bearing the royal dead steamed to the Kiel Canal it passed the German fleet lying at anchor, and all the sailors of the many ships stood at parade. And the whole fleet fired a royal mourning salute. I was a gunnery officer aboard the battleship *Braunschweig*, and I gave the fire signal with a flag. There I

stood giving slow beats of the flag, while the tremendous salute boomed out from the fleet. It was a solemn requiem of gunfire for the departed King. But I couldn't help remembering that terrible morgue and the mysterious body that had been trundled in in a wheelbarrow and the whole gruesome story. I thought of that while the giant cannon fired their funeral salute. I remembered, too, an old South Sea Island chief I had seen when I was a sailor before the mast. He was covered with marvelous tattooing, and was very proud of it.

"This is the royal tattoo," he told me. "It is the tattooing of a king."

"By Joe, yes, it looks like it," I answered.

"Are the kings in your country tattooed?" he asked.

I said no.

"But how can you know they are kings?" he went on. "If they are not tattooed, how can you tell which is king and which is subject? Suppose a king is found dead and cannot say that he is a king? Suppose you found a king's body, how can you tell he is a king?"

I could not give him a satisfactory explanation, and

he thought the white men were fools. I thought he was a riduculous old barbarian.

But now I remembered what he had said. How, indeed, can you tell a king is a king unless he is tattooed? How could they tell at that morgue that this King of Denmark was a king, unless he had been tattooed? And I realized, by Joe, that kings were just like common men, with the same head and trunk and limbs—unless you tattoo them.

XV

DIRTY WORK IN THE SECRET SERVICE, AND THE KING OF ENGLAND'S GOLD WATCHES

When the war came on then was the time for tricks, dirty tricks, by Joe. Everybody was trying to think of some clever way to do damage to the enemy. There was plenty of straight, open fighting and campaigning in the war, but there was also plenty of secret plotting, ruses, and conspiracies to strike at the enemy somewhere, the place where he would least suspect, far behind the lines maybe, at home or in some neutral country. I did some secret-service work for the government, because I knew Norwegian like a native, and Norway was one of the most important neutral countries, where all kinds of spy work and underhand work was going on. I learned a lot about the tricks that were used.

There was a small war on the side between the secret-service forces of both parties, and it was a mean, bad war, by Joe. In the neutral countries of Scandinavia and Holland one important thing wa-

this—we got from them many supplies that we absolutely had to have, most of which were transshipped by them from other countries, the United States, for instance; the British were trying their best to stop these streams of goods that were being diverted to us, and they did it by finding out what firms were buying supplies supposedly for themselves and then sending the material on to us; such firms were put on the black list, and thereafter all cargoes for them were stopped and held. The neutral people that were dealing with us were as secret as they could be, they did not want to get onto the black list. The British spy system had an army of agents who turned in information for filling up the black list. These agents were doing a lot to stop necessary materials from reaching us. Our own spy system put out agents to fight the British agents, and so it was war between the two secret-service forces in the neutral countries north of Germany. It was war to the knife, because one of the best ways to stop a secret agent's work is to kill him.

Suppose the German agent finds a British agent is getting important information for the black list. Well, one mealtime the British agent is in a restaurant. His overcoat is hanging on a rack. The German agent comes in and hangs his overcoat beside that of the

British agent. While doing this he manages to slip a fountain pen in the pocket of the British agent's overcoat. After a while, maybe that night or the next day, the British agent finds the fountain pen. He looks at it. By Joe, that is a splendid fountain pen, the best make. He opens it and at that moment there is an explosion—and the British agent has been removed.

I heard one story of how two British agents removed a German agent. It was at the theater. The German agent was sitting in the orchestra. One of the Britishers was near him. The other was in the balcony and had a pair of opera glasses. Now the act is over, and there is an intermission. Everybody goes out for a glass of beer. The Britisher in the balcony is looking down with his opera glasses. He has them focused on the German spy. When everything is set just right and he has the German perfectly sighted, he presses a button, and a compressed-air mechanism in the opera glass works. It shoots a tiny dart with accurate aim. The dart hits the German in the neck, and is so constructed that it immediately breaks off and falls. The German feels the sting and grabs at his neck. Now he is staggering and in a moment collapses. The dart was charged with a powerful poison.

The second Britisher, who had stayed near by, hurries up and says the German is his friend. He explains that the former has had a stroke. He even adds that the doctor had recently warned him he might have a stroke. And so he carries him away, supposedly to a doctor. By this time the agent who was in the balcony is with his partner and helping him. They take the dead man to his home and carry him to his room. There they go through all their victim's belongings and take what secret papers and important documents they want. Then they call a doctor and get away.

The Russians had terrible tricks. They sent Bibles, wonderful German Testaments, into Germany to the Russian prisoners in the prison camps. The prisoners succeeded in passing the Bibles on to Russian secret-service men outside. They were beautiful books with soft leather covers, and inside there were pages, not of paper, but of guncotton. Each had a harmless-looking bookmark, but in reality it was connected with a mechanism in the binding, and when the string was pulled the intricate and delicate mechanism was set going and in half an hour it exploded the guncotton. The Russian secret-service men would get one of these Bibles into the possession of a man they

wanted to kill. A Bible is the most innocent-appearing thing in the world, and you will take one without suspicion. The secret-service men would have the string pulled and the mechanism working, and half an hour later, when the German had the book under his arm or in his pocket—bang, and he was blown to pieces. In that way they killed one of our greatest war-time scientists, the man who invented the long-range gun that bombarded Paris. He was blown to pieces, and it is believed that he accepted one of those Bibles from a Russian agent and put it in his pocket.

I had a secret agent's assignment in Norway. I know the Norwegian language well enough to pass for a native. The British were short of ammunition, explosives. They needed saltpeter for the manufacture of gunpowder. Our laboratory wizards had devised a way of taking nitrogen from the air and of manufacturing saltpeter. Somehow the British got that formula. In Norway there is much water power, a good place to put up factories for taking nitrogen out of the air. So the British had much of their saltpeter manufactured in Norway. Shiploads went constantly to England. This was bad for us, because every shipload meant thousands of men killed. We of the secret service were ordered to do what damage

we could to this saltpeter trade. We got jobs in the dockyards where they were loading the saltpeter ships. I worked for weeks as a longshoreman, working hard, getting stuff aboard and stowing it in the holds of ships. The Norwegians knew the Germans would try some tricks with those ships, and they were very careful. Every man was closely searched before he went to the docks. He was allowed to come in contact with nobody on the outside during the day, so that nothing dangerous could be passed to him. Only his wife was allowed to see him, when she brought him his lunch, and then they were careful to see that she passed him nothing. But, by Joe, we found a way to get around that. I had with me in Norway a German girl whc could pass for a Norwegian, and she was supposed to be my wife, and every day she brought me my lunch in the usual kind of dinner pail that workingmen use. Then one day she would bring my food in a special pail, which looked exactly like the other pail but was a little different. The bottom of it was a flat disk that could be unscrewed, and this disk was a powerful time bomb. We would eat our lunch in the hold of the ship in the usual way, and while the other men were eating or taking a nap I would unscrew the bomb, set it, and put it somewhere be-

tween the cargo and the side of the ship. Nobody could suspect anything. Pretty soon the ship would put to sea, and when she was well off the coast—*bang!* That bomb would blow a big hole in her side, and she would begin to sink. The men would take to the boats and row ashore. Another ship gone, and the Norwegians and British would think she had been torpedoed by a submarine or had struck a mine. Nobody would guess that there had been any bomb trickery at the dock.

Another job was blowing up ammunition factories, and the German spies had some clever tricks for that. Suppose you put a powerful bomb outside of an ammunition factory, against the wall. When it explodes the shock will set off the whole factory. But how are you going to get near an ammunition factory? The British are very careful. Nobody is allowed to approach. No loiterers around. But suppose a blind man comes along. Nobody suspects a blind man. Everybody sympathizes with a blind man. The poor blind man asks for help. The guards outside the ammunition factory help him along, and when he rests himself, sitting against an out-of-the-way part of the wall, they do not chase him. They have hearts. By Joe, that blind man is a spy, and in some obscure

corner he leaves something that looks maybe like some old block of wood. But it's a time bomb. Pretty soon he limps away, and later on up goes the ammunition factory.

The British and French of course had their bag of tricks for wrecking our ammunition factories. They would find a way to get to the coat of a workman employed in an ammunition factory, and in the inside pocket they would put a small bomb. The workman puts on his coat to go to work. The heat of his body starts a chemical action that starts a timing mechanism. At the factory he hangs up his coat and puts on his working clothes. After a while the bomb in his coat explodes. Maybe it is an inflammable bomb that merely starts a terrible fire. It has a substance that burns so fiercely that it cannot be put out. Fire in the ammunition factory. Everybody runs, and pretty soon the factory blows up.

I had a secret agent's job in Sweden, and that was a cunning trick. I was near the Russian border, where they shipped supplies across into Russia. Among the supplies was much necessary lubricating oil for the Russian railroads. The more damage we could do to the Russian railroads, the better for our army. We had devised in Germany a most tremendous kind of corro-

sive acid. It was so good for terrible tricks that after the war we destroyed all we had. I was one of the men ordered to get this stuff into the lubricating oil before it reached the Russian railroads. There on the Finnish border the barrels were lined for loading on the Russian trains. At night I would go from one to another of these barrels. I had a drill that would make a very fine hole, too fine for the thick oil to leak through, too fine to be seen. Through this I would inject a shot of this powerful corrosive. It was so strong that not very much was needed for a barrel of oil. Fine. The oil goes its way and soon is used to lubricate Russian cars and locomotives. By Joe, what's the matter, what's wrong? The cars and locomotives are out of business. That corrosive has eaten the metal of axles and machinery, and ruined things completely. The Russian railway service carrying troops and ammunition to the front—well, it never was too well-organized, and now it is worse off than ever.

These were things I did or saw or heard about in the secret service, and they point out the fact that the wars are not merely fought in trenches and between fighting ships at sea. Much of the World War

was fought in diabolical fashion behind the lines—dangerous, secret tricks behind the lines.

Some of the trickiest things of the war took place in the campaigns of the submarines. There were all kinds of dodges on both sides. And that reminds me of the King of England's solid gold watches.

At the beginning of the war, when the submarines were first becoming active, the British Admiralty staff gave the order: "If a steamer sights a submarine it will immediately make full speed to ram. The skipper of any merchant ship that rams a submarine will get a gold watch from the King." You could see the fat old skipper when he reads this. Every sailor loves a gold watch, and the prospect of a fine gold watch from the King is enough to make almost any stout-hearted British sailor go full speed ahead and ram a dreadnaught or even a munition ship. With us this gold-watch business was different, or at any rate it was for our submarines. It is an awful feeling for a submarine to get rammed. We thought, "By Joe, we will give those old steamship skippers something to make them happy." So we got up an awful trick. We made hundreds of dummy floating periscopes and under each one was a big mine. "By Joe," we thought,

"these will be something for those skippers to ram. They will be fine to take the place of those gold watches from the King. It will do us good. It will make the skippers nervous about ramming."

Submarines took the dummy periscopes and turned them loose in the North Sea. Now you see the old skipper on his bridge—a fat skipper with a red face and his cap pulled down over one eye. He is thinking, "By Joe, if I could only see a submarine and could have a chance to ram it and get a gold watch from the King." Then, "By Joe, there's a periscope. Full speed ahead. I hope she doesn't dive before we ram her." And full speed ahead he goes. "What a stupid submarine! He is not diving. We have him. He can't escape. We will surely ram him." And so the steamer rams—*bang!* The mine blows up and tears away the fore part of the ship. She begans to sink. The crew take to the boats. "Pull, sailor, pull, pull for the shore." The old skipper is happy. By Joe, he is happy. He lost his ship, all right, but he will get a gold watch from the King. Because he thinks he really has sunk a submarine. He thinks he hit a torpedo just as it was coming out of the tube, and that was what blew him up. When they land they are heroes. Everyone believes the skipper's report is true

and that he really sank a submarine. The naval authorities believe it, too. How can they guess anything about that periscope mine? Every man of the crew gets his share of the prize money and a good dinner. And the skipper gets a solid gold watch from the King. By Joe, he is happy.

Now that business of sinking a submarine and getting blown up at the same time kept on happening. One day five heroes came in, five skippers that had rammed submarines and been blown up. They called the King out of bed—five solid gold watches for five skipper heroes. The British navy men thought it was funny. They were no fools. They suspected something was wrong, and pretty soon discovered the trick. And now it was known that those heroic skippers had rammed not submarines, but mines. But the skippers didn't believe it. They swore they had sunk the submarines. And they kept the King of England's solid gold watches, and were happy.

After that the British Admiralty gave the order that no steamer should ram a periscope until it saw that the periscope was diving. Only if he rammed in that circumstance would the skipper get a gold watch from the King. When we learned this then we thought, "By Joe, we'll let those skippers get some more gold

watches." And we got up another awful trick. We made a dummy that looked just like a periscope and conning tower when floating in the water. They had big mines on them, too. We put these on decks of submarines, one to a U-boat, so that the submarines could turn them loose. And now the skipper is sailing along. "By Joe, there is a periscope, and, what the hell? He doesn't see us. He is coming to the surface. His conning tower is coming up. This time we will get a gold watch from the King." The steamer rams—*bang!* The real submarine ran away from that vicinity after loosing the dummy conning tower, and there is nothing to ram but the mine.

By the time this happened a couple of times the British got tired of this ramming, getting blown up, gold-watch business. They ordered the skippers to keep a close watch and not try any ramming unless they were perfectly sure. Also the King wasn't going to give any more gold watches. The skippers themselves were getting tired of this ramming, and after that the merchant steamers turned the other way when they saw a periscope, and left the ramming to the destroyers.

The British had two buoys at the entrance of the Thames with lights to guide the passage of ships.

They were hollow, and at intervals a man went to them, got into them, and fixed the lights and replaced batteries. We had an idea that we would like to have a lookout post at the mouth of the Thames—a very convenient place, by Joe. So we fixed up a scheme. A submarine went at night to one of the buoys, opened it, and put a young officer in with a supply of provisions and with pillows to sleep on. Then the submarine laid a light cable back to our base at Zeebrugge, in Belgium. The officer in the buoy kept watch and reported everything by telephone. We had mine-laying submarines, and the British had to keep a mine-sweeping force busy all the time. A convoy of ships would put out of the Thames. Mine sweepers would go out first and sweep for mines, and when the sweeping was over they would signal "All clear." The officer in the buoy would wait till the mine sweeping was completed and then he would signal to a mine-laying submarine which was lying in readiness. The submarine would go in and, while submerged, let loose a lot more mines in the waters that had been swept. Now the big convoy comes down—*bang!* One ship hits a mine and starts to sink. Instantly the signal is given, "Stop! mines!" The squadron goes back. The commander of the mine-

sweepers gets hell, by Joe, and is told to go back and do a good job. And he goes back and sweeps and sweeps. Not a mine can possibly be there. When he is through he reports that the passage is positively clear. Meanwhile, the officer in the buoy is signaling for more mines to be laid under water in the waters that had been so thoroughly swept. More mines are laid. The convoy comes down again—*bang!* And another ship is lost. That kind of business went on until the British naval men, at first greatly puzzled, managed to figure out what had happened.

The British fleet lay safely in harbor at Scapa Flow. The entrance was well protected, and our submarines could not get in to take torpedo shots at the big ships. But, by Joe, we cooked up an idea for getting some mines in. Floating mines, you know, will drift with the tide, and if our submarines laid mines at the entrance they would go drifting in. The only trouble was that they would drift in a short distance and then would drift out. If the tide had always just continued going in, it would have been all right. However, we built some mines that had a good deal of intelligence. They had clockwork mechanisms that made them work this way: they were set and dropped in at full low tide, and when the tide began to rise

the mines drifted in. Six hours later the tide turned and began to run out. At this point the clockwork in the mines caused them to sink and lie at the bottom, where they would not drift. After six hours more, when the tide was beginning to rise again, the mines rose, too, and drifted in some more. In that way they worked their way into the great harbor where the British grand fleet lay at anchor.

One night—bang—and a patrol boat hit a mine. How could mines be in the harbor? They thought it must be a submarine that had torpedoed the craft. Submarine in the harbor, by Joe. And the destroyers came charging, chasing all over the water for the supposed U-boat. Bang and then another bang, and a couple of destroyers were blown up. Then they began to suspect mines. It was thus that the great British battleship *Bulwark* was blown up. We had expected to get a battleship or two, although the great craft were lying at anchor. You know how a ship swings at anchor with the tide. We hoped that some of our mines that sneaked their way in would cross the path of one of the British giants as she swung with the tide. And so the *Bulwark* went.

The British played us a fine trick. No doubt they were every bit as clever at tricks as we were. They

took an old ship and filled it with barrels, so that it wouldn't sink, and disguised it neatly to make it look like a warship. Then they laid two lines of parallel mines, with a path down the middle. The fake battleship steamed back and forth in this path. Our U-boats came along. That was during the days before the British had virtually closed the Channel with their famous barriers and the Dover Patrol. A U-boat sees the supposed battleship. Fine. She dives and maneuvers for a shot. She has to swing around to get a broadside shot. That swinging around takes her onto the mine field on one side of the free path. And another U-boat does not return to port. We lost several submarines in that way.

Lieutenant Pust Kuchen, in command of a submarine, sighted that fake battleship and was going to attack it, when he noticed the mines. The tide was very low, and they could be seen. He dived overboard with a steel saw. Then he swam under water to the wire that held the mine anchored and cut the wire so the mine drifted away. That opened a small gap in the mine field, enough to provide a safe hole for the U-boat. He lay waiting for the false battleship to come within torpedo shot. It came down the path, quite near. It was near enough for him to see through

his periscope that it was a sham. "By Joe," he thought. They saw his periscope in there among the mines, but what could they do? Destroyers came down the path, but they did not dare venture among the mines to run him down. He lay there quite safely, braving all the navy the British wanted to bring up. When it was dark he stole out and made away safely. Back in port, he told about the fake battleship and gave a good description, so that every commander would know it when he saw it. That was the end of the usefulness of that sham battleship.

Aye, they played plenty of tricks during the war. These that I have described are not generally known. Some of them are not in official accounts and are merely told in naval circles in Germany. But gradually now they are becoming a part of the rumor and legend of the Great War.

XVI

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND FROM THE TURRET OF S.M.S. "KRONPRINZ"

THE greatest sea story of all is the story of the greatest naval battle, the fight at Jutland. When the fleets of Britain and Germany, the two greatest navies in the world, met in a clash of fire and steel, that was something that people will talk about for many years, and for any man who took a part in that gigantic battle, it is a thing he will talk about until the day of his death. I was an officer in the German battleship squadron and saw the fight from a gun turret of the dreadnaught *Kronprinz*. The sights and sensations of that day are clear and vivid in my mind. I will tell you about that hurricane of shell fire, high-explosive battering steel, and ships foundering, ships exploding, as I saw it. It was something to have lived through, by Joe.

On May 30, 1916, the Third Squadron of the German High Sea Fleet lay on watch in the lower Jade

Channel, which lies to the south of Helgoland. I was in command of a gun turret aboard S.M.S. *Kronprinz*. In the afternoon a signal was raised on the flagship:

"All commanders come aboard."

Little steam and motor launches went swarming.

The idleness of our beleaguered fleet had set our nerves on edge. There in France our comrades of the army were fighting and dying every day, and we of the navy were lying in harbor and kicking our heels. It seemed as though our dreadnaughts would never see any action. Any little variation from the daily round made the more optimistic of us hope that something exciting was going to happen at last.

The conference aboard the flagship continued for about an hour. Then the launches went speeding back to their various ships. We on the *Kronprinz* stood waiting with eager curiosity while our commander came aboard. He had a preoccupied air, said nothing to us, but went straight to his cabin.

"Once more—nothing happens," was the weary comment.

That night men were asleep or on guard, when at two o'clock drums and bugles rang out with a loud uproar:

"Clear the ship for action."

It sounded on all the vessels of the squadron.

"What is it? What are we going to do?" On all sides there were bewildered questions—but no answers.

Munition hoists were tried, the hydraulic apparatus for gun elevation examined, electrical firing devices tested, reserve munitions brought up, and heavy projectiles hurried to the turrets. The whole squadron got under way, steaming forth from the roadstead of Wilhemshaven.

It was an overwhelming picture in the gray light of dawn. Three or four flotillas of destroyers, ten boats each, steamed past us, their funnels belching mighty columns of smoke. The scout cruisers started moving slowly. Far out in Schilig Road you saw the battle cruisers weigh their anchors and spread out in broad formation. Swift torpedo boats surrounded and accompanied them. Slowly and deliberately our dreadnaught squadron unlimbered and swung into a single file and drew out of the channel, the *König*, *Kurfuerts*, *Margraf*, and *Kronprinz*, our latest and strongest battleships. Off Cuxhaven the Second Dreadnaught Squadron steamed out in a great column and joined us. Under full power the battle fleet

plowed its way north through the turbid waters of the North Sea.

We had never sallied out in such force. It was now clear to everybody that we were bent on forcing a major engagement with the enemy. We had been waiting impatiently for it during those dragging months since the war had begun, and now it was at hand.

Scout cruisers drew ahead and disappeared to the north. Battle cruisers followed them. Their combined forces were to get in touch with the enemy and draw him onto our main fleet. Our battleships steamed in formation ready for the shock of the fight. The North Sea was gray and misty that day. The tremendous smoke clouds discharged by our funnels made the atmosphere even more hazy.

At four o'clock in the afternoon a scout cruiser reported small enemy fighting units. The battle had begun. At four-thirty came the wireless message:

"German battle cruisers in action with British."

They were conducting a running fight south, drawing Beatty's battle-cruiser squadron after them. Our battleship fleet drove northward under all power to take a hand. Now the issue of the day lies with our stokers and engineers. Down in the broiling heat of

the hold they do their part magnificently. Funnels belch incredible quantities of smoke, and engines labor so hard that each ship trembles from stem to stern. Northward we drive.

I'll never forget that sight as I stood in my gun turret, binoculars glued to my eyes. Ahead were our battle cruisers. Each ship was screened by spouts of water surrounding it, spouts a hundred yards high. Like the flames of a torch appeared the flashes from the muzzles of their guns, each spurt of fire twice as long as the gun barrel itself, momentary vivid streaks appearing in the curtains of spouts and spray. The *Lützow*, carrying the flag of Admiral von Hipper, was in the lead. Her stem stuck out of the snow-white foam of the waves under her bow. The *Derfflinger*, *Seydlitz*, *Moltke*, and *Von der Tann* follow her. The five battle cruisers were firing broadsides, the full weight of their tremendous guns. The gray giants of the English come into view, *Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Queen Mary*, *Tiger*, *New Zealand*, and *Indefatigable*. They, too, are firing with full broadsides. An incessant hollow roar sounds over the sea. At times you can see a shell burst on a deck.

The *Indefatigable* is the last ship of the enemy

The training ship Niobe, *under command of Count Luckner, the beginning of the new German navy.*

COUNT LUCKNER

in his cabin on the Niobe, *the ship with which he started the new German navy after the World War.*

battle-cruiser line. She has been engaging salvos with the last ship of our line, the *Von der Tann*. Two tremendous broadsides from the *Von der Tann* strike her. A snake of fire runs along her gunwale. Two arms of flame arise straight up from her bulk. Then, with an instant transformation, ship and flame are changed into black smoke, which towers high in the air. We watch, aghast. This is the first time we have ever seen a warship blow up. It is a bewildered moment before we realize that the armored giant is torn to pieces and that everything above the waterline has been hurled high into the sky. The long black barrels of the cannon are seen somersaulting in mid-air. The huge store of oil is flung up and then rains down. It spreads upon the water and catches fire. Into this oceanic cauldron drop red-hot fragments of steel with a hissing sound. For a long time a great ball of smoke hovers over the scene of disaster as if over the crater of a volcano. The space left by the former *Indefatigable* is at once filled by a sister ship which steams into the line. The *Von der Tann* takes the newcomer as her mark.

The fight between the battle cruisers goes on with never-lessening fury. The *Derfflinger* and *Seydlitz*

combine their fire on the *Queen Mary*. They score a quick succession of hits and a second disaster befalls the enemy.

A few days after the fight I chanced to be talking with Captain von Egidy, commander of the *Seydlitz*.

"Tell me about the sinking of the *Queen Mary*," I asked.

"We had her under fire," he replied, "and I'll never forget the moment. It was at about six-thirty, when we were changing from echelon to line ahead in single file. I was following the maneuver of our ships, my eyes fixed on the flagship ahead. I was listening to the commands in the adjoining gunnery room—so far as it was possible to hear anything in the dreadful din made by our guns, which fired unceasingly. There was a sudden silence, as if the ship were holding its breath. Then from a gunnery observer, who had just found his voice, came in a singsong, monotonous staccato:

"'Number three going up in the air.'

"The only response to this great news was the calm voice of Captain Richard Foerster, as precisely as though at a drill:

"'Shift aim to the right.'

"It was a splendid piece of coolness. Then we opened fire on the *Tiger*."

"But how did it look when the *Queen Mary* blew up?"

"My dear Luckner," he replied, "I told you I was maneuvering, with one eye on our flagship. When I glanced over at the enemy through the torpedo telescope my heart jumped to my throat. There, at a distance of ten miles, a huge immovable gray column stood up against the dull blue sky. It must have been two thousand feet across and ten thousand feet high. In its lower part black masses were whirling around. At the top, like an aureole, were glowing, darting spurts of flame. Beside its base something like a torpedo boat was sliding along. A torpedo boat? No, it was number four of the enemy's line, the *Tiger*, but it seemed like a tiny boat beside that immense column, the remains of its exploded sister ship. The *Tiger* took its place where the *Queen Mary* had been and was showered with the falling steel fragments."

While the gigantic artillery duel has been going on between the battle cruisers, the torpedo boats on both sides have taken their part. The torpedo cruiser *Regensburg* comes into sight in front of the flagship of our battle-cruiser squadron. She leads two flotillas

in full force. Enemy torpedo boats come forward to engage ours. A battle between the smaller craft develops between the lines of the larger ships, but it is a mere side show to the main spectacle.

At about seven o'clock our main line of battleships came into action and took the lead from the cruisers. The British plan had been to separate our two squadrons, herd our battle cruisers to the north, and destroy them with the fire of their largest ships. But they lost heavily in the attempt, and had failed. Von Hipper and Von Scheer had joined hands. The British battle cruisers were confronted by the whole German fleet. The salvos of the *König* and *Kaiser* classes resound over the water with a dreadful booming. The battleships carry heavier guns than any that had yet taken part in the action. The British battle cruisers are outranged and outgunned. Now to the larboard of the enemy line loom four gray giants, the heaviest ships of the Grand Fleet, the *Queen Elizabeths*. They had come to Beatty's rescue and attached themselves to his battle-cruiser squadron.

Now there was fire. The ocean seemed to rock with the explosions. We were showered with the 38 cm. projectiles of the enemy dreadnaughts. All around us rose columns of water as high as towers, as though

the water were being sucked up into the sky. When a broadside flew over us the hum was like that of a fleet of airplanes. Our ships ran through the colossal barrage, shaking incessantly from the explosion of projectiles in the water. The *Kurfuerst* and *Margraf* were hit. We could hear the violent explosions as shells struck them. But to our surprise they seemed not to be damaged or to lose any of their fighting strength. All through the battle our ships stood shell fire surprisingly well and kept on fighting when with similar hits the British ships had exploded. Our craft were coal burners, the British oil burners. In our ships the coal was packed all around their sides. It acted as a second layer of armor. A shell which pierced the armor might explode in a coal bunker and not necessarily do fatal damage. A similar hit on an oil-burning British ship would go straight into its vitals and probably explode the magazine.

We advanced with all our power. The *Warspite* is hit. Her rudder is damaged. She no longer obeys the helm. We concentrate fire on her. A white flash of flame bursts from her. She does not explode, but lists badly and has to leave the line. The air is very murky now. The enemy is becoming lost in haze. Out of the dingy mist a wreck appears for a moment. It is the

Invincible, reduced to the condition of a derelict by our shell fire. The *Lützow* has been under heavy fire. Repeated enemy hits have pounded her. She has a bad list. Destroyers surround her with smoke screens in order to hide the wounded warrior from the enemy's fire. The *Seydlitz*, too, is damaged. Far off the small cruiser, the *Wiesbaden*, is seen listing over, enveloped with smoke. One gun is still firing. The enemy takes her under concentric fire. You can see their shells tearing away whole chunks of her. But she still floats. Her one remaining gun still fires. A stoker of the *Wiesbaden*, Zenne by name, had a harrowing experience. The ship sank, and he was one of a dozen men who lashed some beams together and made a raft and were left adrift on it. Night had fallen, and the sea was high. With every high wave the raft capsized and turned over and one or two of the men were lost. This kept on until only Zenne was left. He drifted on the raft for two days and two nights until a Norwegian steamer picked him up.

To the larboard three of John Bull's more ancient armored cruisers suddenly appear. In less time than it takes to tell about it we get their range. Our salvos

strike home. Up in the air go two of them with their armored hulls torn to pieces and clouds of smoke where formerly ships and men have been.

The climax of the battle now comes suddenly. Ahead on the horizon appears a semicircular sea of fire like a gas pipe with its row of little flames. The whole of the British fleet has entered the fight, the full line of Britain's superdreadnaughts, the mightiest sea force in the history of naval warfare. We are in an unfavorable position now, in danger of being crushed against the coast by this vastly superior force. We had sallied out, we had badly mauled the advance forces of the British, and now we were in danger of being cut off from our base by the main enemy force.

"Reverse all along the line!" came the command from Von Hipper.

With a terrific salvo to cover the maneuver, we reversed. The sea boiled like a kettle while the ships came around.

"Torpedo boats against the enemy!" Another order to cover our retreat.

The torpedo boats had been circling around the battleships. They turned and with bows high and

sterns deep, like racing speed boats, they rushed toward the enemy. The intervening space of the sea, ten miles or so, now became spotted with exploding shells. The British battleships directed all their fire on the new foe. In the van of the attacking destroyers was Von Steinbrinck's flotilla, which many a time during the war had distinguished itself for its daring. Steinbrinck's boat was hit by a heavy projectile and plunged down. The destroyer just behind it, the *Rottenboot*, picked up the survivors, including the commander. On deck Von Steinbrinck waved his cap, still in command of his flotilla. Two, three, four shells strike the *Rottenboot!* She vanishes with all hands. Thus perished the brave Von Steinbrinck.

The torpedo attack served its purpose. It diverted the fire from our battleship squadron and enabled it to withdraw. It was growing dark now. We steamed south to await a renewal of the battle in the morning.

Thinking that our entire deck must be strewn with shell fragments, I sent a sailor from my turret to gather some as souvenirs of the battle. He returned with an astonished exclamation:

"The British have been shooting cauliflowers at us!"

He had actually gathered an armful of cauliflowers.

The atmospheric pressure caused by the heavy fire had burst the galley box. It happened to be full of cauliflowers, so the deck looked like a truck farm. Of shell fragments there were none. In imagination, inflamed by the excitement of the fight, we had felt the vessel shake a hundred times, but she actually hadn't been struck at all, in spite of the rain of projectiles through which we on the *Kronprinz* had sailed.

Our fleet held to a steady course all through that black night. The brilliant beams from our destroyer searchlights shepherded us and kept us together.

A blinding flash, like lightning. Then white flashes of fire shoot up. A long-drawn-out boom roars through the night. Our good old *Pommern*, an obsolete battleship, has been torpedoed. Not a man was saved.

A violent fire breaks out at the front of our fleet. Enemy destroyers, which in the darkness have passed our entire battle line, have mistaken us for the British fleet. They are recognized by the *Westfalen* and immediately placed under the combined fire of the first squadron. Flames burst from oil tanks. Blazing oil covered the sea. It was a fearful sight, like a blazing boulevard of oil. Everything thundered, salvos from the big guns and exploding torpedoes.

Dawn was breaking when a searchlight signal

flashed ahead. All eyes strained, and then our ship, the *Thuringia*, answered the signal with a full broadside. The *Black Prince* had mistaken us for the British fleet. What a sight it was to see her go up!

The day came but no renewal of the battle. We were in a favorable strategic position for it, and we hoped that the British, although badly battered in the early action, would continue. We were eager for a decisive test of strength. But Jellicoe felt the weight of the British Empire on his shoulders. England had far more to lose than to gain by staking all on one throw. Jellicoe himself relates how, while spreading out his fleet in battle line, he saw a floating wreck ahead and at first took it to be a German ship. Only after inspecting it more closely through his marine glasses did he recognize it as the wreckage of his own once mighty battle cruiser, the *Invincible*. That was the kind of thing to dispose a man to caution.

Thus was fought the Battle of Jutland. We knew that the British losses had been heavy. We were astonished to find how small our own had been. The British lost three of their prize battle cruisers, sunk in action. We lost one, the *Lützow*, and she, while badly damaged in the fight, sank only on the return trip. Her crew was taken aboard the other ships,

and she was scuttled. The *Seydlitz* was damaged, but returned under her own power to Wilhelmshaven, was repaired and put into service again. The only other large ship we lost was the old *Pommern*, and she was about ready for the junk heap anyway.

XVII

CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE BLOCKADE, THE "TAIPUS" OF THE SOUTH SEAS, AND THE SPIDERS OF A NEW ZEALAND JAIL

THE climax of my career came when I took an old windjammer, the *Seeadler*, through the British blockade, raided the seas with it, and sank Allied shipping until we were shipwrecked on a coral atoll in the South Seas. That is the story we told in our first book, *Count Luckner, the Sea Devil.* Still there were several curious things that were not related. One of the most important was left out because I did not know it then. In fact, I had no idea of the real explanation. There are funny things in the world, by Joe, and one of the funniest in my experience is my coming to the United States to learn the real story of what was the most nerve-racking and critical point of my career as the skipper of a German sea raider—the crisis of my life.

During my recent lecture tour I visited in Auburn, New York, and there at the house of a good and hos-

pitable host was a gentleman who said he wanted to meet me and tell me something. He had been to my lecture, and he said he could tell me something about my story that I didn't know. His name was Captain Holland, and during the war he had served as an officer aboard a British warship. His craft had done patrol duty.

"Count," he said, "you remember when you ran the blockade?"

"By Joe, yes," I replied.

"You don't know how you succeeded in getting through. You say so in your book. You said so in your lecture. I can tell you, for I was on duty in the blockading fleet that Christmas Day when you slipped past us."

"By Joe," I said, "this is interesting. Tell me. I have often wanted to know."

We sat down in a corner and talked for an hour. It is interesting to hear from somebody else the true story of the most important moment in your life.

I must give you an idea of the problem we had in running the blockade. We had our ship thoroughly disguised as a Norwegian, but that was not enough. We knew that when the British searched us they would wireless back to London, giving our name

and ownership and asking if we were all right. The British had full records of all craft that left port. So we had to pass as a ship marked down and approved on the British list. We got the name of a Norwegian three-master that was due to sail about the same time as ourselves. She would be on the British records, listed as O.K. We disguised ourselves as her, ship's papers and everything, and intended to get to the blockade just before she did, so that we would beat her to the blockade, and when we were searched the British cruiser would wireless back to London giving the name of the Norwegian original whose place we were taking. London would reply, "All right." And we would pass. Of course, it might be a bit awkward for the real Norwegian, when she appeared, but that was all a part of war.

With this scheme thoroughly worked out we sailed. Then there was a hitch. By Joe, there is always a hitch. We had not got far from port when we got wireless orders to wait. We were held up, and lay at open sea. The reason was that the famous submarine *Deutschland* was returning from her memorable voyage to the United States, and the British were on the lookout for her. They had swarms of patrol craft. We were told to wait until the lookout for the

Deutschland was over and most of the patrol craft were back in port and we would have only the normal blockade to run. We were held there for a week and then were ordered to proceed. But by this time our Norwegian original had sailed and passed through the blockade, and we would look fine appearing as a ship that had already passed and been searched days before. Of course, we could go back and look for another Norwegian vessel with which to identify ourselves. But that would be too much of a delay. Trust to luck, I thought. It was Christmas time, and the holiday spirit relaxes everything, even in war, and then a tremendous gale blew up. We would have a good chance of running through unobserved in the storm, which would scatter the blockading ships. And so we took a chance. With the name of our ship changed to the *Irma*, records and all, we rode the hurricane through the lines of the blockade, not a ship to be seen in that fearful weather, and on Christmas Day were around the north of Scotland and all clear. Then at the last moment, on Christmas morning, a British auxiliary cruiser sighted us and stopped us.

They gave us a search, but we were well disguised. They left the ship with no suspicion, but ordered us to

wait half an hour. At first that didn't mean anything, and we were full of joy. Then it dawned on us what that half an hour of waiting meant. The cruiser was sending a wireless to London to ask if we were O.K. on the list. That was the one thing that had slipped our minds. We forgot that there would be no *Irma* on the list. By Joe, the game seemed to be up. All we could do was wait there, certain that the cruiser was inquiring about us by wireless, and that she would get an answer that we were not listed. The half an hour passed and then, by Joe, I could scarcely believe it, the cruiser signaled us, "Continue voyage." And we continued voyage and went on with our raid. I never knew what had happened, and why we were allowed to go on. Had the cruiser failed to wireless, or what? And now Captain Holland explained it all to me.

"You know, it was Christmas Day," he said. "People were away on holiday. At Admiralty headquarters in London only a few radio operators were on the job in the office that usually answered queries about ships. That part of the job had been transferred to Liverpool for the feast day. The captain of the cruiser did wireless to Liverpool, and at Liverpool they had no *Irma* on the list. But this transfer of

British battle cruisers meet the German high seas fleet off Jutland.
To the left are the leading ships of the German fleet.

COUNT AND COUNTESS VON LUCKNER

He flew away from her ***in a free*** *balloon when they were on their honeymoon in Germany.*

offices on Christmas had confused things, and Liverpool thought the list might be wrong. They wirelessed London, not taking into account the fact that at London there were only a few wireless operators on the job. At London the message was received by a young operator. He didn't get the name *Irma*, but only the number. Each ship had a number on the British list. It was a little confusing and he was full of Christmas cheer and he wasn't bothering too much. Instead of calling back for both name and number, he merely looked up the number—the fake number that you had given yourselves. There was a ship assigned to that number, and it was all right. So he wirelessed back, "All right." Liverpool then, to make sure, wirelessed our supposed owners in Norway. The offices there were closed for Christmas. Liverpool, then, could do nothing more than wireless to the cruiser that you were all right. Aboard the cruiser they were glad enough to be rid of you and return to port to celebrate Christmas. So they signaled you to continue voyage. You went your way rejoicing, but, as for us, it was the beginning of trouble that Christmas Day.

"When the cruiser returned the captain made out his report, including the search and passing of the

Irma. As a matter of form they looked up the list they had in the headquarters at port. No *Irma*. Much wireless—no *Irma*, by Joe. And the captain of the cruiser got hell. All hands out to chase the *Irma*. That ship is suspicious. She must be a German. And so, instead of celebrating Christmas like Christians, they all had to put to sea in that devilish weather to hunt for the *Irma*. You certainly made plenty of trouble, Count. Fourteen ships steamed out into the storm to look for you. I was an officer on one of them, and we all cursed you plenty, by Joe.

"And now you don't know what further luck you had. You had plenty of luck all through. Afterward, when you were raiding and we were looking for you on all the seas, we called you Lucky Luckner. You remember after the cruiser let you go—the weather —that awful gale from the east. It made us miserable, but it was the luckiest thing in the world for you. You ran before it, due west, over toward Greenland. We never thought of looking for you in that direction. If we had we might have caught you. But we had a wrong idea altogether. How could we suspect you were a raider? Who ever heard of an old windjammer out to raid the seas? We thought you were bound for German East Africa, that you were a secret supply

ship carrying munition to the German forces that were fighting us there, under command of Von Lettow-Vorbeck. We thought you would steer a course south toward the African coast and then would round the Cape of Good Hope for German East Africa. Instead, you sailed toward Greenland and then south, across the mid-Atlantic, and, after sinking ships in the Atlantic, rounded Cape Horn and went into the Pacific."

When Captain Holland told me this I said: "By Joe, I really was lucky, luckier than I thought. Anyway, I like that name, Lucky Luckner. Any old sailor knows that what you need in this world, on land or sea, is luck."

Another thing that I did not tell in our first book, *Count Luckner, the Sea Devil*, was of the visit we made to a tribe on one of the South Sea islands. We were sailing in the Pacific and had sunk several ships and were steering a course to anchor off an uninhabited island in order to stay there a while for fresh water and fresh food and a bit of resting and loafing. We finally did make this stop at the atoll of Mopelia, where our ship was wrecked on the coral reef. But before we reached Mopelia we sighted another island. It did not suit our purpose. It was inhabited by Poly-

nesians, and there might be trouble. All the same I thought it would be a polite thing if I went ashore and paid my respects to the king. Before I could do that, though, the king came to pay me a visit. That monarch was full of curiosity, and, besides, he thought he would get a present. All right, I know how to treat a king. I have met kings before. I have been at the banquets of kings, kaisers, and czars. I know how royalty should be received.

That island king came in style. He came in a marvelous big canoe with fine decorations. There must have been at least thirty men paddling. In the middle was a fine canopy, and there the king was sitting.

"Here comes His Majesty," I sang out. "Give him a good reception—music, champagne, and everything." You see, we had captured a ship well loaded with champagne a couple of months before and still had some bottles left.

The king was a wonderful-looking fellow. He was decorated with what looked like long buffalo hairs and with bracelets and anklets. Six under-chieftains followed him, with bronze spears. He could talk a little pidgin English of some kind, and when he found out that we were Germans he showed he knew something about the war. He had heard from some British

that the Germans were great fighters, maybe scoundrels, but great fighters. The king didn't mind scoundrels so much, and he admired fighters.

"Me lookee like Kaiser," he said proudly.

That fat native didn't look like the Kaiser at all, but I know how to behave in the presence of royalty.

"Sure," I said, "you look like the Kaiser."

In my cabin he saw a picture of the Kaiser and studied it with deep admiration.

"Me king, he king, too," he said. "He fight all the world. He kill everybody in the world. Me look like Kaiser."

"By Joe," I thought, "he has funny eyesight and funny ideas." Then I said, "Maybe this king will feel better with a bottle of champagne." We sat down at a table on deck, and I had my orderly bring a bottle of champagne. That champagne we took from that champagne steamer was good stuff, plenty of charge in it, and my orderly knew how to serve a bottle the way they do it in a fine Berlin restaurant to make it sound important. He let the cork out with a loud pop. Those natives all jumped when that cork went bang, and the king jumped the highest. Then, when he saw something to drink come out of the bottle, he under-

stood and tried to make his under-chieftains believe he had not been frightened. None of them had ever seen anything charged with carbonic acid gas, and the bubbles astonished them. The king tried to put on that he was thoroughly familiar with the phenomenon. By Joe, that king was a faker. Everyone got a glass of champagne, and when they drank it you never saw anything so funny. They were not used to having carbonic acid gas in their stomachs, and they were surprised when it began to come up. Their cheeks were blowing out, and they said: "By Joe, bubbly-bubbly-oo-oo-oo."

Then they asked for some more champagne. It had a good effect. I gave them some more. And that old king, he got stimulated. That old chieftain, he got inspired. He said to me:

"Captain, you come ashore. I give you festivity. No man ever had such festivity."

I asked him if the invitation included the crew, and he said it did, and not to forget to bring some of that bubbly stuff along.

The next afternoon we went ashore in state, the officers in full uniform, the sailors made as smart as possible after a long voyage, the prisoners we had aboard in their best clothes. One boat was loaded

with cases of champagne. The king was waiting for us with his staff, and all the people kneeled to him and to me, because they thought I was some kind of a kaiser, too. And they brought us to a palace on a low hill surrounded by palms and all kinds of orchids. The palace was built on twenty-four columns. Everything was twelve or twenty-four, because that was the sacred number, the lucky number, of the king—twenty-four. There were many mats, marvelous mats made of the bark of a tree. Every woman during her life has to make a mat for the king. All her life she works on it and delivers it on her sixtieth birthday. If she does not live to be sixty it is not a king mat. A king mat must take sixty years.

These people were head hunters. They cut the heads of the enemies they killed and smoked and dried them and kept them for souvenirs. The great ambition is to get the head of the king of the enemy tribe, and if a king takes his people to war and loses he nearly always loses his head also. The heads that have the place of honor in a king's house are the heads of other kings. It is a good idea. It is a reason why they don't declare war in those parts so often. The king knows that if he loses the war he loses his head also. It would be a good idea for us if our kings knew the

same things. They would not want their heads dried and smoked for souvenirs.

The men were fine strong fellows, tattooed with wonderful designs. The king was tattooed more than anybody else, because he was a king. I saw pieces of what looked like tattooed pigskin. Each was the skin of an ancestor. In our country we have a similar custom. We cherish a lock of hair as a keepsake. In that island they took a piece of skin off the breast or the arm. They tan it, as we do pigskin, and it is as strong as pigskin. Then they tattoo it.

They had wonderful girls, but during the heat of the day you saw only men. The girls were kept indoors in the shade, so that they would keep their skins light. In the evening everything became very quiet. I thought, "What is going on here?" Then I saw twelve girls coming in. They were the daughters of chieftains. They were *taipus*, which means that they were sacred. Each one was guarded by twelve old women. And now those *taipus* came on, beautiful with flowers in their long hair and chains of colored flowers around them. They wore skirts of fiber and grass. They came up and started to grin and show their snow-white teeth. "By Joe," I thought, "what is this?" One after another, they opened their mouths

and the chieftains looked at their teeth. I didn't know what that was for. "By Joe," I thought, "I have to do something." So I pinched their cheeks. They were very beautiful.

Now the great ceremonial came. They must make *kava*, which is the beer and champagne of those parts. They must chew kava roots and spit the juice in a bowl with twenty-four legs, the sacred number of the king. They began to chew and spit, and that was the kind of beer we would have to drink, along with the champagne we had brought along. And they were chewing and spitting. But you did not have any impression that it was disgusting.

One man, a kind of steward of those parts, took two coconut shells and filled them with kava-kava, the imperial drink. He gave one to the king and one to me. And then the king said: "Hear, my friends, I drink with this great skipper some kava-kava. He will be our friend forever." And then he said, "Kava-kava," and they all said, "Kava-kava," and I said, "Kava-kava." And so I drank the kava-kava, which had been chewed by beautiful girls. By Joe, it tastes like soap and water. I had to drink it all down, or it would not be good manners in the presence of royalty. I found the best way to get it down was to think of

the beautiful girls that had chewed it. After a few more drinks of it, I found it was all right. And it had a good effect. It made you keep thinking of the beautiful girls that had chewed it.

Three hundred hogs had been killed and roasted in holes in the ground. It was a feast for us and the whole nation on the island. We ate plenty. We were at what you might call the royal table in a space covered with banana leaves. The table was a banana leaf, and we ate lying on our stomachs. We ate plenty, and we drank champagne and palm wine. The king preferred the champagne to the palm wine, and so did I.

We were there in a circle, the king and I and maybe six of the favorite *taipus*. The other *taipus* with blossoms in their hair played an instrument like a guitar and sang lovely songs. And above us the palms waved in the southeast trades and through the palm leaves you saw the stars. The stars winked down at us and the old man moon was chuckling and laughing, and the melody of the music drifted with the wind out over the Pacific Ocean. And now it was ten o'clock and the glowworms came out by thousands, much larger and brighter than anything we have in our climate. Everything was dark but the stars and the

moon and the glowworms. There was enough of that pale white light to see the colors of the flowers that were everywhere, white, pink, and yellow. And then there was a knock-knock-knock, and at once the Queen of the Night opened, that wonderful flower. It opened with the night dew. And now I saw the Queen of the Night lighted by the stars and the moon and the glowworms. All your senses are filled with the night impression of the flowers, pink, blue, rosy red, yellow, and violet, and the perfume of the flowers.

Oh, it is wonderful perfume, and it spreads over the ground, and the south wind rushes through the palms. And that is the spell of the tropic night, with the melody of native songs and wonderful instruments.

We feasted till far into the night, and everyone had about five pounds of pork and plenty of champagne. Our stomachs were growing. And when we couldn't eat any more we turned over, one after another, the king and all, and lay on our backs and went to sleep with our faces to the palms and the sky.

The next day we raised sail and left that paradise in our wake. We went on with our cruise, and after many adventures it led to that old familiar place—jail. During my years before the mast I was always

coming near going to jail or actually going there. The important thing in my life was keeping out of jail. And now it was jail again. We were wrecked on the coral reef at Nopelia. After a while on the island I took a small boat with half a dozen of my men and sailed away a thousand miles and more to try to find another ship and capture it. The British captured me. Then it was prison. I was held in a prison camp. I escaped, and the British captured me again. Then it was a real jail, a hard bad prison, at Mount Eden, in New Zealand.

"By Joe," I said to myself, and I thought I was the old sailor I had been. "By Joe, Phelax, you good-for-nothing sailor, here you are in jail again."

I had some experiences in that prison of Mount Eden that I have not told before. One came right after I had been locked up in my dungeon. A man came into the cell, and he said:

"Hello, Count, how do you feel? It's an honor to have you here. You don't find a count in jail so often."

"*Ja wohl*," I said, "and I'm not an ordinary count. I've been in jail more than any other count."

We talked a little bit more, and then he said:

"I come to give you a shave, Count."

"I don't want a shave from you, I shave myself."

"My boy, they wouldn't let you get a knife in your hand. You have wooden knives and forks."

"Well, they are fools to think I would commit suicide. I feel fine. I don't mind jail. I have lots of fun in jail."

"Maybe, but if you don't let me shave you, you'll have whiskers like Von Tirpitz."

"Who are you, anyway?" I asked.

"I'm in jail, too, by Joe."

"How many years you got?"

"I have a lifetime."

"What did you do?"

"Murder."

"Well, by Joe!"

"It's all right, Count. You don't have to be scared to let me shave you. I am a woman killer."

"Well, by Joe!"

"Yes, I am a woman killer. I was a typewriter salesman, and my woman she did wrong to me. And so I blew the daylights out of her. But I never killed a man. I never had the desire to kill a man."

And so I let him shave me. I didn't want whiskers like Von Tirpitz. But it's an awful feeling to have a murderer shave you, especially when the razor goes over your throat. By Joe, you feel cold on the back.

But that woman killer was all right. He shaved me many times, and never made any slips with that razor. He was a good fellow.

In jail there is much time to think. You can think of many things. You say to yourself, "Well, Charley, what kind of a fellow are you?" And you think about that, and you come to the conclusion you are not much good. You remember all the bad things you have done and the foolish things, what you did with your money, how somebody swindled you, and the girls that made a fool of you. You say, "By Joe, Charley, it's better you are in jail—you are safe in jail—the world outside is bad and wicked." You have time to learn much in jail. You could read books if you wanted to. You could study science and philosophy. You could become a great philosopher. I had time enough in jail to read Schiller and Goethe, six Schillers and ten Goethes, but I didn't. I studied other things. I used to count the bricks in the walls, and I would find out just how many bricks made my cell. Or I would spit out of my cell window and see how far I could spit. And I also studied spiders. I learned plenty about spiders.

In that Mount Eden jail in New Zealand were many spiders. Spiders were crawling here, there, and

everywhere, and in every corner was a spider web. I thought, "Maybe I could make some use of the spiders." The only thing they let me keep in that jail was some match boxes. I caught some spiders and put them in my match boxes. Then I made all kinds of exercises with those spiders. I trained them. I watched them weave their webs and saw how they caught flies. That's a wonderful thing, a spider's web. It is such fine engineering, you wish you were a spider. Then I began to think about a very interesting question. How much web has a spider got inside of him, how many feet of web? I had to find that out. I studied the spider and found out where the web came from. I put a spider in a match box and pulled out a short length of web. I closed the box enough so that the spider could not come out but so that I could pull the web out. Then I pulled, bringing the spider aft to the narrow slit where the box was open. I pulled and pulled until I had pulled out all the web of that spider. Then I measured. In jail you have plenty of time for measuring. I measured the length of one turn of web around my finger, and then wound the full length of web around and counted the turns. I found that a spider has a hundred and twenty feet of web inside of him. That was interesting. I tried it

with other spiders, and several times with the same spider, to make sure I was right. And the spiders didn't like it. They didn't want to make any more web. They said, "What's the use of making web if this big fool pulls it out of us all the time?" But they couldn't help making web. By Joe, it was funny. They had to make web, and I measured it. I measured more than a thousand feet of spider web.

The warden used to come, saying:

"Well, Count, do you want to take a walk now?"

"In a little while," I would reply. "I am busy with my spiders now."

I liked exercise and needed it, but I was studying spiders, and I always knew that a man who does not keep at his job is no good. I ran away from home and went to sea because I could not study books, but, anyway, I could study spiders. So I felt good, and knew that those teachers and professors who said I would never learn anything and would always be an ignoramus, they were fools, by Joe.

And those spiders helped me in other ways. They helped me do my duty to my country. In jail you must make people respect you. If you ever go to jail remember that you must show them that you are strong and not afraid and an honest man. Don't mope

and lose your courage. But you have to find something to do with your time. That is the trouble with jail, there are too many hours in the day and too many days in the year. If you have nothing to do you sit and think and wish you had a glass of beer or good company with jolly shipmates and some girls. You must find something to occupy your mind. With me it was necessary. When I was a common sailor and in jail it didn't matter if I lost courage. Who cares anything about Jack Tar? But as a prisoner of war, a German naval officer in the hands of the enemy, I had to show them that I was not afraid, not cast down. The wardens wanted to give me tin plates to eat from, like those they give to all the convicts, but I said: "Get out of here, I want china plates." I told them they shouldn't treat an officer prisoner of war that way. I demanded those china plates every day. I didn't get them, but the people of the jail respected me for wanting them. And so I had to keep up that kind of spirit, and not let the long hours of prison get the best of me. The spiders helped me. Through those spiders I was able to keep on demanding the china plates and bear myself in a way that maintained the honor of my country.

XVIII

HE THOUGHT I WAS THE KING AND THAT THE FLUNKIES WERE MARSHALS OF THE COURT

The war was over. I was released from prison in New Zealand and sent back to Germany. Things were terrible, by Joe, with the disasters of a lost war and the terrors of revolution. It was a bad time for officers. Many were killed by the Reds. I never had much trouble, however. I always get along well with rough fellows, workingmen, sailors. I could talk with the most savage Reds. They knew I had been a common seaman myself, and I always kept plenty of the ways and manners of a common Jack Tar. I couldn't get rid of them. Rough, tough fellows could say: "The Count, he is one of us." Many officers had exciting experiences during the revolution, but the most exciting I had was an occasional argument with a gang of street-corner Bolshevists—with me telling them that I could reef a sail better than any of them and had lived a harder life before the mast than they.

About this time I had a funny experience in Sweden. By Joe, I enjoyed it. I was in Stockholm, staying at the Royal Palace as a guest of the Queen for a few days. It was a fine place, everything smart and grand. I liked it. I was very comfortable. I used to sit there and remember the old days before the mast. A sailor often thinks about kings and palaces. "By Joe," he says, "I would like to be a king and live in a palace." Many a time I meditated about royalty. "By Joe," I would imagine, "there are many rooms in a palace. A king must live in a different room every hour of the day." I supposed a king must wear his ermine cloak all the time and his royal crown on his head. Now, after twenty years, I was living in a palace. I had seen a good deal of kings, and in the Royal Palace of Sweden could do as I pleased and order what I pleased. In the fo'c'sle I used to think of palaces, and now in the palace I was thinking of fo'c'sles. That's fine; when he has it it isn't so good; and when he hasn't got it again it's fine once more. And maybe there are other people like that, besides sailors.

I looked out of a palace window and could see down over the harbor. Steamers were lying at the wharf and sailing ships, too. It looked familiar. It

reminded me of the many old windjammers on which I had sailed and of that old windjammer raider of mine, wrecked out there on the coral atoll Mopelia in the South Seas. I went to the telephone and called the harbor master.

"Is there any German sailing vessel in harbor?" I asked.

"Yes, Your Excellency," was the response, "there is one from Rostok with a cargo of salt."

I got him to tell me just where that craft was lying, and then it was, "Thank you," and "You are welcome, Your Excellency." "By Joe," I thought, "they call everybody in this palace 'Your Excellency.' I like that." Any sailor is pleased if somebody gives him an honorable title, such as "mister" or "skipper" or "Your Excellency."

I called for the royal automobile and started down to the docks in it. That was something fine. The royal automobile was of imperial blue with gold trimmings, and aboard were the royal chauffeur and the royal footman in uniforms like a generalissimo or a Lord High Admiral. People on the streets looked with great respect and thought I must be a grand duke or a minister of state or something like that.

Pretty soon I saw that German sailing ship, a

dirty old schooner, unloading cargo. The longshoremen on the dock saw the royal automobile coming up. They called to the mate:

"Mate, did you ever see the King?"

"No, a king?"

"Well, look, Mate, the King is coming. By Joe, the King is coming."

"Well, by Joe," said the mate, and he ran to the cabin to the skipper. "Hey, Skipper, you want to see the King? The royal automobile is at the pier. Come out and see the King." The skipper was not dressed, but he started to throw on his clothes to come out and see the King.

The King got out of the royal automobile, walked across the gangplank and went aboard that old schooner. The mate nearly collapsed.

"By Joe, Skipper," he hollered down through the skylight. "On deck, quick. The King is coming aboard."

"The King is coming abroad! By Joe, you are crazy."

"No, Skipper. It is true. The King is coming on board. Come on deck."

The old skipper was getting on his clothes as fast as he could, and hurried out of his cabin fastening on

his collar. You know how hard it is to button a collar when you are in a hurry. You can have plenty of trouble. The skipper had one end of the collar over his ear. As the King came along he saw somebody disappearing behind the mast. The poor skipper did not dare appear in the royal presence with his collar over his ear, and he was hiding behind the mast trying to get it buttoned.

"By Joe," I said, "what is this man doing behind the mast? Is he a criminal? Is he going to kill me?"

Then I saw a face peering out. It was a familiar face. By Joe, I thought, I have seen that old mug somewhere. Then a piping voice, afraid and bewildered:

"Hey, is that you, Phelax?"

"By Joe, hello, Matson."

It was my old shipmate, Matson. We had been sailors together and then had gone to navigation school together at Lubeck to get our captain's ticket. I had not seen him since.

"By Joe, Phelax, are you the King? I thought you were the King. Isn't that the royal automobile?"

"Sure it is, Matson."

"But what does it mean?"

"I am the guest of the King, Matson. I live at the royal palace."

"Oh, you are the guest of the King, and you honor me with a visit?"

"Sure."

"But, Phelax, how did you know I was here? Did the King tell you?"

"Sure, he told me," I replied. "The King said to me, Matson is in port. A fine fellow, Matson."

"The King said that, Phelax? Well, by Joe. But then I have been putting into this port plenty, and everybody knows me here, and maybe the King heard of me."

And so we went to the cabin for a drink. "By Joe, Phelax," said Matson, "I will invite you to a bottle of something special. I would offer it to nobody else but you, my old shipmate and the guest of the King."

He had to work hard to get at that bottle. He had to move plenty of cases. He had some of the most marvelous port wine which he had got in Portugal, and he had it hid behind plenty of cases to smuggle it in past the customs officers. He opened the bottle, and I never tasted such fine port wine.

Every time he thought about his old shipmate being a guest of the King we had another drink, and he thought about it plenty.

Then he had another idea. He remembered something. "By Joe, Phelax, the marshals."

"What marshals?"

"Why, those marshals out in the royal car." And he meant the chauffeur and the footman. Their uniforms were so magnificent he thought they must be marshals of the court. "Phelax, we must invite those marshals for a drink."

Matson was a smart fellow. He thought that those marshals in such magnificent uniforms having a drink in his cabin would make a great impression on his crew. A skipper always likes to make an impression on the crew.

"By Joe, Matson," I said, "those are not marshals."

"You don't understand, Phelax," said Matson, very wise. "I understand Swedish better than you. I have been in Swedish ports more than you. Those fellows in such magnificent uniforms must be marshals."

"All right," I said. "They are officers of the royal

court. Maybe they are marshals. Bring them in for a drink."

The crew on deck were admiring the uniforms, and when Matson told them that these were marshals they were impressed, and when Matson said they were coming to his cabin to have a drink they said, by Joe, "That is an honor." The skipper invited the marshals. They hesitated, but I told them it was all right.

"By Joe!" Matson was ordering the crew around to show what an honor it was to have the marshals. "Bring the bottles, bring glasses, bring a tray."

The tray once had been silver. Now it was brass. Matson polished it off with his sleeve and told the cabin boy to arrange the glasses on it. The cabin boy had dirty hands, and Matson told him to wash them.

"By Joe," he said to the boy, "do you know what an honor it is to have with us marshals of the King?"

"No, Captain," said the boy, who had a dumb brain.

Matson gave him a slap on the side of his head. "Now do you know?"

"Yes, Captain."

That poor boy came along deck carrying the tray

and glasses, and he was calling out to the crew, "The King's marshals, the King's marshals are here."

The marshals had plenty to drink, and they were feeling good when we left. Afterward they used to say to me, "Say, Count, when do we go down to the harbor again and pose as marshals?"

XIX

THE STEALING OF THE NOSE OF THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTESS OF KÖNIGSMARK

I HAVE traveled much by airplane. In Germany the sky routes are better developed than in any other part of the world. I have had a lot of going from this place to that, and whenever I can I take an airplane. It is the quickest. It gets you there without much time. My first was in 1914 in a seaplane. It took off and started to go higher. I felt helpless. I didn't know where my stomach was. I was used to high places. I had spent a lot of my life aloft in the rigging; and how it swings up there when there is a blow! But this was a different kind of swinging. I didn't know what to make of it. Later on I got used to it and formed the habit of traveling by air. The airplane is surely the modern way to travel, and I believe all that people say that the sky will be the navigable sea of the future, the universal highway. When I got married I brought my wife from Sweden to

Germany by airplane. I wanted her to come down to the soil of my country like an angel from the sky.

But I don't like the airplane. I prefer the free balloon. For travel that is a pleasure, give me the free balloon. The airplane is like a steamship. The free balloon is like a sailing ship. They both depend on the wind. The free balloon is the best travel. You never know where you are going. During the war I had a chance to become a naval flier. I didn't want to. If they had had free balloons in the war, drifting in the sky, going wherever the wind happened to take them—that would have pleased me, although I had not yet traveled in a balloon at that time. I should have liked to have fought the war in a free balloon. I could have gone in the submarines also, but a submarine is worse than an airplane. It is still more mechanical. And to sink in a submarine! By Joe, I shouldn't like that. I'd much rather fight in a free balloon than in a submarine.

My first free balloon trip was interesting. I was on my wedding trip. Yes, with Ingaborg, my present wife. We had gone from Eisenach to Oberhoff and were in the hotel at Oberhoff. In the afternoon we started out to go for a stroll, and, by Joe, right across

the street from the hotel they were blowing up a free balloon.

I said to the countess, "That is very interesting. Let's go over there and watch them."

She agreed, although she was not enthusiastic. Sometimes she is not enthusiastic about things that interest me.

We went over there. An army officer was in charge of the balloon. I introduced myself to him. He was a nice fellow, and showed me everything and explained everything. He and another chap were just making ready to start out on a flight. We were looking in the basket, and my wife was standing some distance away when he said:

"Would you like to come along, Count?"

"By Joe!" I replied. "Yes. I have never been in a balloon before, but I would like to see how she sails. But don't say anything to my wife. She might not let me go."

So we didn't say anything, and there we were in the basket, ready to start, and she didn't know anything about it.

"Leggo," he commanded.

They let go the ropes, we threw out ballast, and up we went, drifting down the wind.

My wife was on the ground looking, and the first thing she knew was when she saw her bridegroom starting up into the sky.

"Oh, he is flying away," cried the countess. "We are just married, and he flies away."

Of course, I couldn't hear her. They told me about it afterward.

We had a good trip, fine sailing for many miles through the sky, among the clouds, and landed in the town of Quedlingburg in Saxony. We made an easy landing and found the town in an uproar. By Joe, there was a lot of disturbance. An Englishman had stolen the Countess of Königsmark's nose, and that was something serious.

The Countess of Königsmark was one of the most beautiful women of her time. She had a face like that of Venus, and her figure was like that of Venus, too. By Joe, she was the kind of woman you like to meet. Especially for a sailor, it would be a delight to see such a woman—if you know the kind of girls sailors usually have. The Countess of Königsmark was the mistress of William the Strong, King of Saxony. He was a great fellow. He had more than three hundred and sixty children. That was why they called him Strong. He loved the countess very much. He

loved her better than he loved his wife. Landsmen and sailors alike are that way sometimes. The countess was a great woman, too, with much intellect. She advised the King on matters of state and told him what to do. Whenever there was some difficult diplomatic matter it was the countess who negotiated it. She was so beautiful that the statesmen of other countries just kept looking at her and forgot to think, and she was so clever that she was thinking all the time. If the King wanted a new treaty she got him all the treaties he wanted. So everybody said, "By Joe, the Countess of Königsmark is good for the country," and when she died a splendid tomb was made for her. Her sepulcher was in this same town of Quedlingburg, where we landed in the free balloon. She was embalmed wonderfully and put in a glass case, where people could see her for centuries and admire the beauty of the lovely countess. People came from all over to see. Year after year thousands came to Quedlingburg, and they all had to pay. It cost two marks each to see the countess, and the town of Quedlingburg made twenty or thirty thousand marks a year. That was fine. Everybody liked it. So it is no wonder when our balloon came down in Quedlingburg there was an uproar, for some-

thing terrible had happened. The burgomaster told us:

"An Englishman has stolen the nose of the Countess of Königsmark."

The Englishman had been the only visitor to the mausoleum that day, and he had opened the glass case and broken off the countess's nose and taken it away with him as a souvenir. "What good is a countess without a nose? Nobody will come to see the beautiful Countess of Königsmark unless she has a nose. Quedlingburg will lose money. The town will lose twenty or thirty thousand marks a year, by Joe." That is what the Quedlingburgers were saying, and they were mad. Ordinarily when a balloon comes down in a town everybody is excited and comes around to see it. But we were neglected. The Quedlingburgers were all trying to catch the Englishman who had stolen the nose of the beautiful Countess of Königsmark. They never found him. To this day the countess has no nose, and Quedlingburg is out the twenty or thirty thousand marks a year.

To us aeronauts it was funny, and we laughed. Then, after we were through laughing, I thought, "By Joe, what will my wife say?" Maybe I could have taken another free balloon and kept going on

the wind, but I thought I had better return and face the music. And there was music. The countess gave me hell.

"If you fly away the first two days of marriage," she said, "what will you do in ten years?"

After that whenever I did any free ballooning I always told my wife first.

The longest free balloon trip I ever took was a thousand miles. We landed in Poland, and there we found awful people. They kept shooting at us as we passed over the fields, and when we were coming down they were shooting at us, and when we landed we got a beating. They gave us a terrible licking, and I can still feel my bones ache. I have had too much licking in my life, and should not get any more at my age. For Jack Tar a thrashing is good, but for a naval lieutenant commander getting along in his forties it is not right.

We started out from Leipzig, where the chemical industry is. That is the right place to get plenty of hydrogen gas. There were two of us, myself and Lieutenant Commander Bertand, a well-known balloon pilot. We sent up trial balloons, to see how the wind was at different heights. The wind was fine aloft. It would take us due east.

"Fine, Felix," said my comrade. "With that wind we can go straight across to China."

China would have been all right, maybe, but Poland also was east, and we should never have gone near that country. If we had known about the licking that was coming we would have wanted to drift west, over the Atlantic Ocean, or north to the North Pole.

We went straight up and ascended to a great height. The wind toward the east was away up there. We wanted to go east, and, although we did not know it, toward that good beating. At ten thousand feet we were going east at a great rate. It was fine, a great silence. One bad trouble with the airplane is the noise, but all is perfectly silent in a free balloon. Noise keeps you from thinking, but silence is fine for thinking, and I always liked to think.

Night came on, and we sank to a lower level. When the sun is shining the gas in the bag is expanded and that keeps you high. After dark the gas shrinks and you descend. We threw out some ballast and kept at a low level. There was a big full moon shining. The moon is a wonderful fellow. When you are close to him, aloft in the rigging or up in a balloon, he talks to you, "Hello, Phelax," he says, "here we are again,

by Joe. How goes it?" When I am in Brazil he says, "Hey, Phelax, are you here, too? How are you behaving yourself in this latitude?" I love him, that old fellow. He always has the same funny look on his face. He never gets cross, never has a bad look on his face, like a creditor handing you a bill or a judge sending you to jail. We have always been good buddies. That old fellow moon is my best friend. When we were starting out to run the British blockade in my sea raider, and everything was very nervous and we were wondering how soon we would get sunk, the moon looked down at me with a fine expression on his face. "You'll come through all right," he said. "I'll see you next month all right somewhere out in the ocean." That's the way a friend should talk, and not say, "You're a fool to try these things." And right on the dot the next month the moon came again and said, "You see, I told you you would get through all right. I'll see you again a month from now." He always remembers me. Up in a free balloon, where the air is thinner, the moon is much bigger. You are very close to him, and it is so still and quiet that you can hear what he has to say. The free balloon is the best place, better than the crow's nest of the tallest mast,

to talk to the moon. That is why I love the free balloon and think it is much more important and useful than the airplane.

With a bright moon shining the shadow of the balloon moves across the earth like a great ghostly thing. As you pass over a village with that strange shadow sweeping below you the dogs howl, the cattle moo, the chickens cackle, and the pigeons fly around wildly. Once we passed over a valley where a herd of cattle were in the fields. As that shadow came they scattered, lowing, in all directions. An old bull happened to take the way the shadow was going, and on he ran with the shadow after him. By Joe, he traveled, with his tail up in the air. He didn't stop for fences. He went right through them. We passed over a herd of wild hogs. Some ran away, and some followed the shadow. Then there was a deer, a stag. He fought with the shadow. He put his horns down and butted it. He ran after it and went at it with his horns once more. He kept up that warfare for miles, until he got tired. Up in the air you watch the shadow and the strange things on the ground. It is fine in the daytime, but still finer in the dark. With a pair of night glasses you can see strange things. Somebody told me once that when the shadow passed over even

the fish in a pond were agitated. The night birds are afraid of the balloon sometimes, but there was an old owl that came and perched up among the ropes. We could see him plainly in the moonlight, the solemn fellow. He was a hoot owl, and in the great silence aloft it was ghostly to hear that never-ending *hoo—hoo*.

All the time we were taking an easterly course, and the next day were over Poland. *Bang*, *bang*, the farmers down below were shooting at us. So we went higher.

"Suppose they shoot at us when we are coming down," I said to Bertand.

"They can't hit us," he answered, and I was hoping he was right, by Joe, and he was hoping the same thing.

Our ballast was getting low, and when you have no more ballast you have to come down. The farmers were still shooting at us as we sailed over them.

"Well, we've got to come down," said Bertand, "but they can't hit us." I did some more hoping, and so did he.

Some farmers on the ground shot at us as we came down, but by that time we were worrying about something else.

"Will they help us with the rope?" Bertand wondered.

You know when you land in a free balloon you let a rope drag, and some fellows grab hold of it and pull you down. If you don't have that assistance you have a bad time landing.

Our worry on that point was needless. The men in the fields were running toward the place where we were descending. They were chasing the rope. They were anxious to pull us down. We thought they were fine fellows for their helpfulness—and then we found out. Poland then was having a big spy scare. The farmers thought we were spies and were anxious to haul us down to give us a licking.

Pretty soon our basket was bumping the ground, and those fellows were grabbing it. Ordinarily you get out of the basket carefully, or the balloon will shoot up in the air. They caught hold of us and dragged us out of the basket. The balloon shot up, and some of them nearly went along with it. One or two got a bad tumble. That made them all the angrier.

"Ouch, my head. Ouch, my neck. Oh, oh, by Joe, who kicked me in the stomach?"

There were twenty men giving us a licking, punch-

ing us, kicking us. I was sure my bones were broken. Bertand was sure his back was caved in. This took place rapidly, before we had a chance to think. We might both have been killed if we hadn't got the same idea at the same time. We managed to get our hands in our pockets. In one pocket was a pistol. In another was money. We reached for the money. All the world loves money. With handfuls of bank notes we reached out to the peasants who were beating us. When they saw the money they stopped. We gave each some marks. They took us to a village, where an official said we were all right. Meanwhile, our balloon was gone. Some other peasants got it, and we never did recover it. We were glad to leave Poland and made a vow that the next time we did any traveling by free balloon we would take some other direction than east.

On another trip we came down in a country district of South Germany, near a farmhouse where a lot of old women were cooking over an open fire. A strong wind was blowing, and we were having trouble in landing. A gust blew us over to that farmhouse, and the basket caught fast to the roof. We hung there and couldn't get loose. The old women were down below, and one was hollering at us something awful.

"Get away. What are you doing with my house? By Joe, get away."

The trouble was that we couldn't get away. And now there was a tearing. The balloon, whipped by the strong wind, was lifting the roof off the house. The roof was raising little by little. And now, by Joe, those old women were making a row. They were screeching as loud as they could. There were some long hop poles near by. These poles have pointed ends, and the old women were jabbing us with them. Our basket was low enough for them to be able to spike us in the neck and head. By Joe, that was terrible. We would catch hold of one pole, and another would jab us in the ear.

"Let us alone," we yelled. "You are killing us."

"*Donnerwetter*," they screamed, "what do you mean by destroying a poor woman's house? What do you mean, by Joe?"

And they kept jabbing us with those pointed hop poles, and we kept trying to dodge the pokes. It was not a dignified place for two German naval officers.

Meanwhile the balloon was gradually taking the roof off the house. It lifted it to a certain height, and then there was a final tug and off went the roof. In the house were dogs and chickens and sheep, and

they made an awful uproar. The dogs and sheep dashed out of the house without a roof, and the chickens flew out. We dragged the roof along for a few feet, and then the basket got free. The wind took us up a bit, and we went scudding along, glad to be away from those old women. If they had got us they would surely have killed us with the hop poles.

We never went near that place again, but inquired about the house. We learned that the old woman had insurance on it, and the insurance company had put a fine new roof on the house for her. Then of course she was sorry that she and her friends had jabbed us with those hop poles.

That is the way free ballooning goes. It is a great sport, only some people don't understand it right. I am a great believer in aërial transportation, but we should not have airplanes. Those machines are no good. We should use only free balloons.

XX

AND SO WE FOUNDED A NEW GERMAN NAVY

The German fleet, which had performed so brilliantly at Jutland, was gone. Bolshevism, mutiny, the surrender of the ships, and then their sinking by the hands of their own crews—that was the final catastrophe of the world's second navy. It might have appeared as if we were forever done as a sea power. But now, ten years later, we are coming back. It is evident to all that once again we will be an oceanic power. Already our new cruiser, *Ersatz Preussen*, has set the world agog with her new type armament and her speed. The new German navy will be a force to be reckoned with in the councils of the world.

The beginning of the new German navy was, then, a matter of world-wide importance, although there were no brass bands playing. Our ships were gone, and our sailors were mutinous revolutionists for the most part. Our naval officers were in disfavor with the Socialist government and often were in danger of their lives from the anger of the Red mobs. Still,

the naval chiefs were thinking ahead, thinking of a naval future. Their idea was this: "We have neither ships nor sailors, and the only thing we can save is the naval tradition that we established during fifty years of naval expansion."

The important thing was to keep a corps of trained officers who would be the nucleus of a new power at sea whenever we should be able to develop it. They would be the custodians of our naval tradition. What we needed was new officers coming along, young navy men who would be a link with the past. The chiefs of the former German fleet decided to start a new navy right away and to begin with the training of young officers. I happened to be lucky enough to be selected for one of the first jobs.

One day Admiral Behnke said to me:

"Luckner, we must have a training ship for young officers. We must get one, fit it out, and put it into service. Do you want to do the job?"

And I said, "By Joe, that suits me fine."

The way the German navy always trained its officers was to give them experience in the old art of sailing-ship navigation. The traditional windjammer gave a man an amount of nautical education that nothing else could duplicate. And so my command

was to be of the kind of ship I loved best, a sailing vessel, aboard which cadets would learn the art and lore of the sea.

The first trouble was that we had nothing, neither ship nor supplies nor money. The government would give us nothing. My task was to get everything. In harbor at Hamburg lay an old windjammer. She had been a four-masted schooner but now was rigged as a bark. She was ancient and dilapidated and needed everything. I was able to get no better craft, and I got her only after much scheming and maneuvering. Next I needed supplies, ship's materials and food. There was plenty of stuff at the old imperial shipping yards but there was no possibility of getting official permission to take any of it. I went to the yards, where the workingmen were mostly Bolshevists.

"By Joe, boys," I told them, "here I have a ship. We are starting the German navy again. I need some supplies. You have plenty here. You can help an old sailor out and give me some. You have control here, and who will ever be the wiser if you lend me a hand?"

They were against the idea of a new German navy, but I sat around with them and told them sto-

ries of old days before the mast and about my cruise in a sailing-ship windjammer. They listened and saw that I was a real old-time sea dog. And they had to laugh at that ancient windjammer I had. It was a funny craft for any skipper.

"Hey, Count," they said, "you are going to start a new German navy with that old tub?" And they laughed some more.

"Sure I am, and I need some supplies, by Joe."

"All right, Count," they said, "we will give you something."

They thought it was a good joke, but they were impressed by my optimism. Anyway, it was not their stuff they gave me, and most of them were old sailors who are always willing to plunder something. So they stole plenty out of the shipyard, gave me everything I needed—canvas, ropes, sails, tar, lumber, tools, and provisions.

"By Joe," I thought, "even when a sailor becomes a Bolshevist he still remains a sailor and is pleased to steal something and help out a shipmate in trouble."

The new German navy was ready to begin its career. We called our training ship after the first training ship of the old German navy, when it began years ago. That name was *Niobe*, and by a curious

chance it was the same name as that terrible old Russian windjammer, the *Niobe*, on which I had made my first voyage. We didn't call it openly a training ship, but a tender, which was more innocent. If the Allies had found that we had anything so ambitious and optimistic as a training ship, they might have put a stop to our new venture before we got started.

I was to take the ship to Flensburg on the Baltic Sea near the borders of Denmark. Our naval academy was there, and I could pick up a crew of cadets. They would have their training and at the same time be the crew, common seamen, of the *Niobe*. I was to sail to Flensburg, but meanwhile I had no crew. And, by Joe, a crew is necessary on a ship.

I went down to the docks, where there were a lot of old Bolshevist seamen hanging around. I went to a few of them and spoke to them.

"Have you a job?"

"No, by Joe, I have no job."

"Have you plenty to eat?"

"No, by Joe, I have not plenty to eat."

"Then come with me."

I got enough together for a crew and then gave them a talk.

"Boys," I said, "I need a crew for the training

ship that is starting the new German navy. Maybe you don't like the idea. But you like to eat. I want to take this ship to Flensburg. I have no money to pay as wages, but I can give you plenty to eat. Say whether you would like to have me for a skipper on a voyage to Flensburg."

"Sure, Count, we'll go." They thought I was a jolly skipper, and they wanted something to eat.

So the training ship of the new German navy weighed anchor and sailed with a Bolshevist crew. I took care that there would be no Red ideas and no mutiny. I told them that I was as experienced an old-time sailor as they were, and to prove it gave them some stories about the old life before the mast, rounding Cape Horn in a storm, or sitting in a jail in South America. They could understand that kind of thing. And I gave them plenty to eat. They were as good sailors as you could want, and we had a fine voyage to Flensburg, where I discharged them, giving them each a ham or something like that.

At Flensburg I told the cadets there, "Boys, we are starting a new German navy." They were optimistic about it, too, and I picked a crew of fine lads. "Say, Count," they said, "we'll make a fine ship out of this old windjammer."

"Fine," I said, "and the first thing to do is to clean up this dirty old hulk."

I put them to work doing plenty of swabbing. We built in a storage room and a fine steerage with canvas hammocks for them to sleep in. We made new sails and mended the rigging. We needed a cook. I found an old out-of-work sea cook and engaged him to come along for something to eat. He had been very fat before the war, but with the starvation of war time he had become only bones. His clothes hung around him like sails that are too big and have no wind. He was glad to have an opportunity to fill his clothes out a little. But now we had no food, no provisions. I had got plenty from the Bolshevists at the shipyard, but between the appetites of the Bolshevist crew coming to Flensburg and the appetites of the boys while they were refitting the ship, nothing was left.

"Boys, we'll put to sea," I said. "Weigh the anchor, by Joe, and raise sail."

And the *Niobe*, the training ship that began the new German navy, put to sea without any provisions aboard. We flew the old flag, not the new flag of the Socialist Republic, but the old flag of the Empire.

In the Baltic Sea were many German islands where

there were good farms. Farmers always have something to eat. I had no money with which to buy provisions, but I had ideas. We put into harbor at an island and landed. I began to talk to the people around. A landing crew of my boys had each a sack. It was late in the evening, and as it grew dark they started off around the island. There were potato fields, turnip fields. Each boy made a raid on a field, creeping along in the darkness and digging up potatoes and turnips and filling his sack. Then they sneaked down to the boat, and we had potatoes and turnips to eat. Not so bad, when you are hungry.

I told the people on the island that I was Count Luckner, skipper of the famous *Seeadler*. Everybody had heard of my sailing-ship raid. The farmers gathered around, and I told them a few little stories. They wanted to hear more.

"By Joe, boys," I said, "I will tell you plenty of stories, such marvelous stories as you have never heard. I learned to spin yarns in the old fo'c'sle. I am an old-time sailor, and I know of more strange things about strange ships and strange oceans than you will ever dream about."

"Fine, Count, tell us something."

"By Joe, I will, but first I want something."

"What is it, Count?"

"I will tell you stories, but I want a hog."

"A hog?"

"Yes, a hog." I might have added, "a hog to go with the potatoes and turnips," but I kept still.

Those farmers had plenty of hogs, and so they said sure they would give me one.

That was a fine day. I told stories the best way I could, the most inspired way, so that I could earn that hog. I thought of every funny or dramatic thing I had ever seen or heard of at sea, and whenever my memory failed or words did not come freely I thought of that hog. Those farmers heard strange things, by Joe, and they were delighted. They brought the hog and butchered it for me. They cut it into quarters, and four boys took each a quarter and, holding it aloft as a standard, led the procession back to the ship. "Follow the ham," was the cry. "Follow the ham; it will go fine with the potatoes and turnips." And it did go fine. We never had a better meal, especially that old half-starved sea cook.

Day after day we sailed among the islands, flying our old war flag. The boys had plenty of work as seamen in the ordinary course of handling the ship, and

I gave them extra drills and instruction to make good sailors of them. All the time we had to have provisions, and we worked out a fine technique. At night on the islands the boys would take their bags and plunder the potato and turnip fields. They became expert, and I made it a rule that we should be just. "Do not steal too much from one farm," I gave the order. "Take a little here and a little there, a sackful here and a sackful there, so that nobody will lose too much." The farmers to whom I told stories spread the word on the other islands. They said how wonderful my old stories of the sea were. The people on the other islands wanted me to come and tell stories to them.

"All right," I answered, "but you must give me a hog."

And each time I got a hog in return for the story-telling. I made a regular lecture of my stories. I gave lectures on the islands, and that was how I began my career as a lecturer—a lecture for a hog. Soon I had more of these hog lecture dates than I could fill. Then it was a competition, an auction. I went where they had the fattest hog. "How big is your hog, Charley?" "A hundred and fifty pounds." "How big is your hog,

Fritz?" "Two hundred pounds." "By Joe, I lecture for you, Fritz." One day one of my boys stole a fine fishing net, and then we fished in the Baltic. There are fine fish in that sea. We caught plenty and ate plenty. Sometimes we had more fish than we could eat and we had no ice to keep them. We gave quantities of fish to the farmers of the island and got vegetables in return.

Whenever I gave a lecture my boys came along with me. They were smart, good-looking lads and made a fine appearance in those villages. The farmer girls all looked at them and smiled. And so the boys made friends with the farmer girls, who liked them very much. They danced and were merry. Every one of my boys had a sweetheart on each of the islands we went to. I said to them:

"Boys, it's all right for you to go with the girls. A sailor likes girls. But remember this is no mere pleasure trip. This is patriotic, for the Fatherland. We are building the new German navy. So there must be something else than fun. We need provisions. We always need provisions. Everybody has a big appetite, especially that old sea cook. Go with the girls, but, by Joe, you must make the girls give you something, a sack of beans, a sack of peas, a ham, or some

bottles of beer. I forbid any of you to dance with a girl unless she gives you something to eat or drink to bring back to the ship."

Those boys were fine. They knew how to do their patriotic duty. They made it a rule of honor among them that a girl had to give them a sack of beans or a sack of peas or a ham or some bottles of beer before they would flirt with her. They understood this kind of foraging romance very well. At every port they came back loaded with provisions.

The weeks went by, and the *Niobe* continued on her cruise, training officers for the new German navy. We had the jolliest of days and nights. And how we ate! I had to keep the boys making trips up in the rigging to keep them from getting too heavy. And that old sea cook, he was half starved no more. His face got red and round. His bones got some covering. Every day he grew fatter, until finally he filled out the clothes he had left from his fat days before the war. He filled them out perfectly.

The fame of our training ship got around at the fashionable beaches on the Baltic. Rich people were there, taking their vacations. They asked me to come and lecture. I did, and took a fee of money from them. They used to pay us to have dances and parties

aboard the *Niobe*. In that way we got money enough to maintain our training activities. No more did my boys have to raid the farms for potatoes and turnips. No more did I have to give a lecture for a hog. No more did my boys have to get a payment of stuff to eat and drink from their sweethearts. A cinema company wanted to make some motion pictures aboard our boat. I said they could if they would outfit us in new uniforms. The ones we wore were nearly played out. And so it was not long before we appeared in as smart uniforms as you will find in any navy.

Two years passed, two years of happiness and hard work. When one crew of cadets was well trained I took another. The new German navy was getting a good personnel of young officers experienced in the way of the sea. As a training ship the *Niobe* had established its usefulness and place. The government gave us support. Then trouble came. We had sailed under our old colors, red, white, and black, and not under the new Socialist Republican flag. We were careful about this, because the old flag was forbidden. We did not keep it at the masthead when we put into the big harbors on the mainland. Our allegiance to the old flag was rumored around, and some

people objected. Then the government objected. I was ordered to fly our old flag no more. I must hoist the Republican colors. That I would not do. Under the red, white, and black I had fought. Under the old flag I had seen the tremendous blasting of shell fire at Jutland. Under the old flag I had run the British blockade in my sailing-ship cruiser, had raided across oceans, and had been taken prisoner. Under the old flag I would sail, and under no other. No, by Joe, I would not. Rather than do it, I resigned my command and from the Navy.

The *Niobe* continued her career under another command as the training ship for the new German navy.

XXI

I BECOME A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

A BIG hall, a fine hall, a hall in a university. I never did feel comfortable around places of learning. They always give me an uneasy feeling that somebody is going to give me a book to study. They remind me of how ignorant I am. However, students are all right. They have the feeling of adventure and know how to appreciate an old sailor. Anyway, I was giving a lecture in this big university hall to students and to the faculty. This was after I had begun to give lectures all over Germany. The place was packed with hundreds of students, and there, in the places of honor, sat the faculty. The professors made me a little uneasy. They looked so grave. They were such educated men. They had passed plenty of examinations. I was afraid they would think, "What an ignorant sailor." They might think my sailor's German something awful, and they would know every mistake in grammar I made. However, they were really fine, splendid men, who, although they

had so much learning, could overlook the deficiencies of a man who had never had the capacity to get any. I was soon to understand how well they could forgive low German and bad grammar, and do honor to a life at sea and adventures in the war.

I gave my lecture, telling about things that happened at sea, and got along fine with my audience. Then, when I was through, everybody came to attention. Something was going to happen. "By Joe, what's this?" I thought. The students were all in their academic costumes, and now here comes the rector of the university. He is carrying something, a rolled-up paper like an admiral's staff. Then he opens up this paper and reads something to me. "What is he saying?" I wondered. He was reading in Latin. When he was through I asked:

"What does it mean, by Joe? Latin is one of the languages I never learned."

It meant something wonderful, something you could never dream of. By Joe, old Phelax Jack Tar, what is this? The meaning of that Latin was that they were bestowing on me the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, *honoris causa.* I, Doctor of Philosophy, well, by Joe! Old Phelax of the fo'c'sle a Doctor of Philosophy. I wanted to laugh, only I felt so grateful

and humble. I replied with many thanks, saying how unworthy I was of this honor.

"Honorable Rector and Gentlemen, I could never get any education. I was never able to pass through the third grade," I said, "and my teachers said I surely would become a bum. What would they think now if they knew that I was a Doctor of Philosophy? There was old Professor Stinkel. He tried so hard to pound something into my head, and he was the surest of them all that I would be a bum. He was a Doctor of Philosophy, and now I am a colleague of his. Honorable Rector and Gentlemen, I could never have expected the honor you have given me. Maybe I might have dreamed of being a king, an admiral, or maybe some day an angel in heaven, but I never expected to become a Doctor of Philosophy."

However, there I was, and here I am, a Doctor of Philosophy, *honoris causa*. People said it was Doctor of Philosophy, *humoris causa*, and it was humorous all right.

"By Joe," I thought, "if I am a Doctor of Philosophy I should know what philosophy is." I had only a vague idea. So I got Meyer's *Conversation Lexicon* and looked up under Philosophy. I saw it meant scientific wisdom. By Joe, I thought, I am even more

ignorant of philosophy than I ever thought. So I said to myself I had better get a book on philosophy, so that I could understand what it was about.

I went to a bookstore and asked for a book on philosophy.

"By what author?" the man asked.

I didn't know the names of any authors on philosophy, and, not wanting to make a fool of myself, I said, "Any author that you can recommend."

"Well," he responded, seeming to know all about authors on philosophy, "how about a book by Schopenhauer?"

I looked at him hard. I thought he was fooling me. You see, I thought Schopenhauer meant something else again. In the prison camp in New Zealand there were two fellows who were musicians, and all day they used to play the piano together, four handed. We used to call them the two Schopenhauers, because in German *schoppen* means pints, as pints of beer, and *hauer* means hewer, chopper—pint choppers. The joke had an added meaning for those who knew about Schopenhauer the philosopher, but I was unacquainted with him. So in that bookstore, when that man mentioned Schopenhauer, I thought he might be making fun of me and meant those two

schopenhauers, pint choppers, who used to play the piano together all day. I kept looking at him, and he didn't seem to be joking. I was thinking how I could keep from making a fool and ignoramus of myself.

"Schopenhauer," I said conservatively, "let me see the book."

He brought a big book, and on it was written the title—*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung—The World as Will and Idea.* I looked inside, expecting to see pages of music. I thought those two piano-playing Schopenhauers might have written some music. I thought *The World as Will and Idea* might be a symphony or an opera. No music, no notes. It really must be philosophy, I thought. So I bought the book.

By Joe, and I tried to read it and find out just what philosophy was like. I read three pages and tried to make out what they meant. I couldn't understand. It was too deep, too scientific. "By Joe," I thought, "I must try another philosopher." So I bought a book by Hegel. That was worse than the other. I tried to read two pages of it and failed. Then I thought I would inquire about the names of some philosophers. I had to know, because now, since I was a Doctor of Philosophy, I was a colleague of

theirs. So I asked around, and I learned the names of my colleagues Schopenhauer, Hegel, Nietzsche, Kant, Homer, and Socrates. That was plenty to know about philosophy. I could mention the names of my colleagues in a learned way. That is plenty for most kind of learning. All you have to do is to mention a few names, and although you may be the greatest ignoramus people will think you have plenty of education.

Once I was at a party and a pretty girl sat next to me. She was preparing to go to university, and I asked her what subject she was going to study. She said she was greatly interested in philosophy. "By Joe," I thought, "this is a smart girl." She asked me if I was interested in philosophy.

"I am a Doctor of Philosophy," I said. "I know all about Schopenhauer, Hegel, Nietzsche, Kant, Homer, and Socrates."

She was greatly impressed when I mentioned the names of my colleagues and said she hadn't progressed that far.

Sometimes I sign my name with a Ph.D. When I have written a letter, and in some places I am not sure of the spelling and in other places I am not sure of the grammar, I sign boldly, "Luckner, Ph.D."

Then when the man who gets the letter sees those mistakes he looks down at the Ph.D. and he thinks they must be right. It is fine to be a Doctor of Philosophy, *causa honoris*, *causa humoris*. And so I sign this collection of fo'c'sle tales—Luckner, Ph.D.

THE END

Please return to

J. Arthur Johnson